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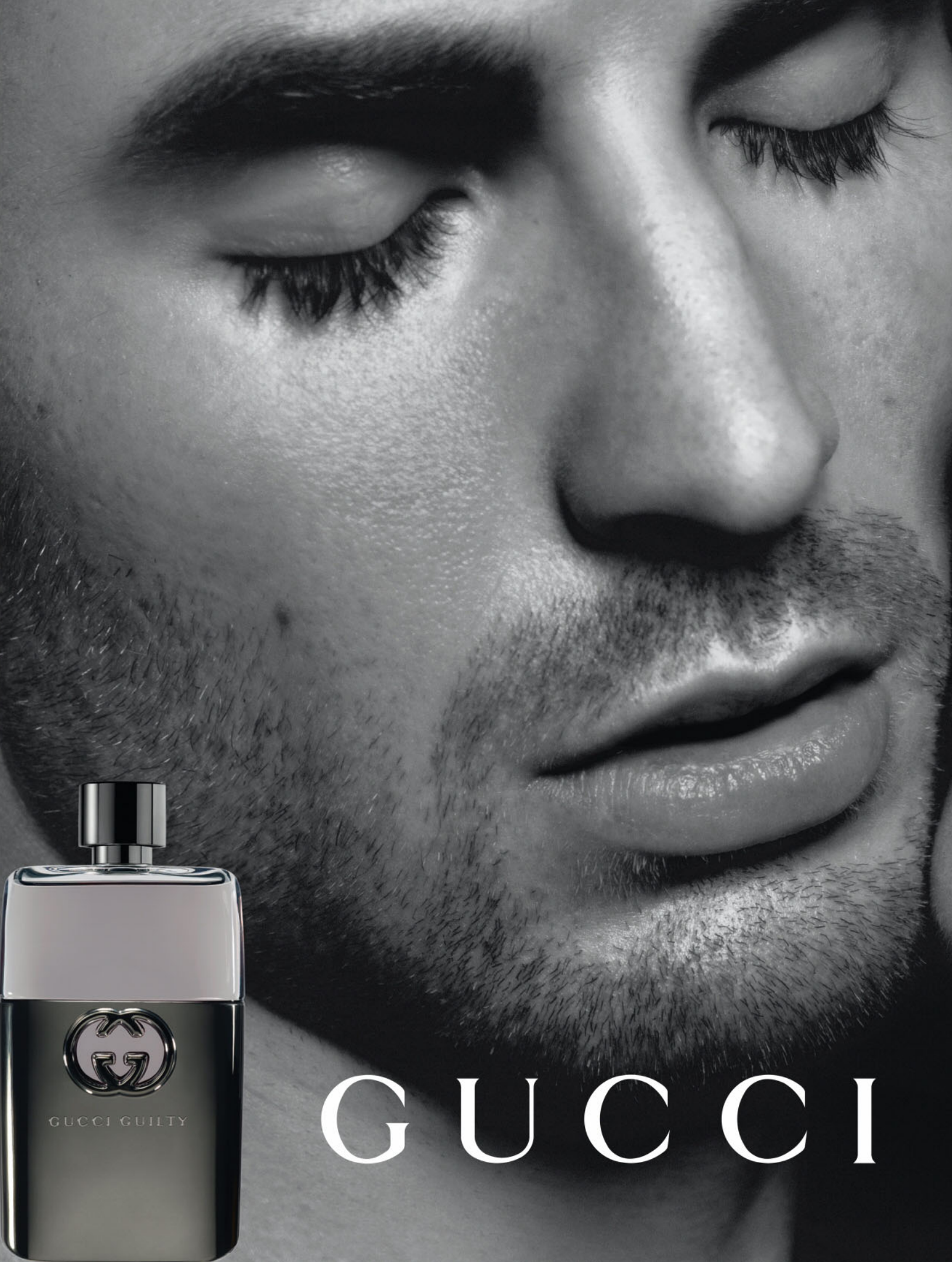
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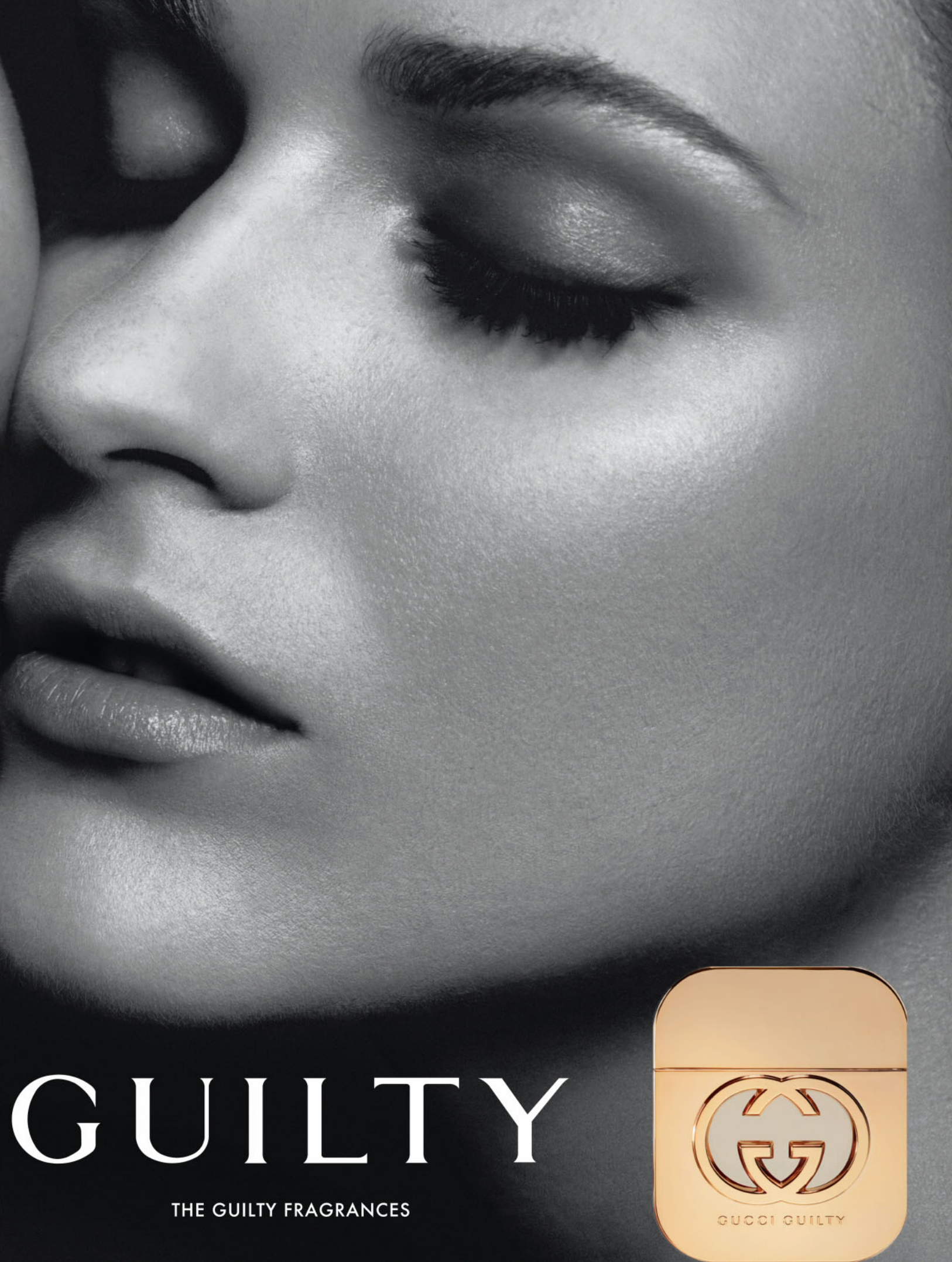
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p126 *The rise and rise of Lupita Nyong'o. ELLE meets the Star Wars actress*





JANUARY

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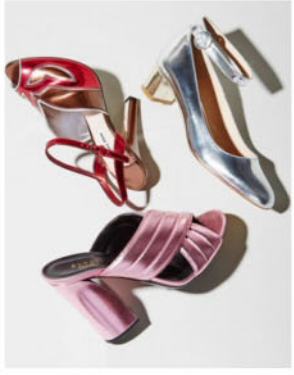


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Photography: Cameron McNee.



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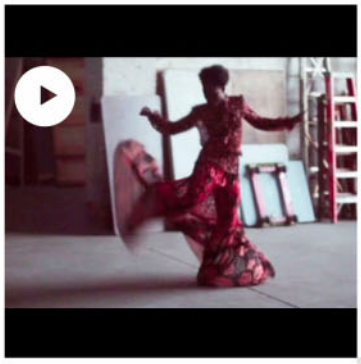

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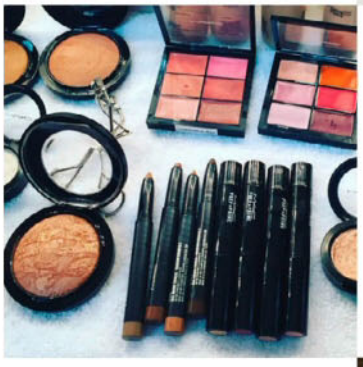
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SARAH HEPOLA

Sarah is a writer and an editor at salon.com, where she reads other people's secrets for a living. A contributor to *The New York Times Magazine* and *The Guardian*, her CV also includes travel columnist, film critic, sex blogger and, for about 15 seconds in the late-Nineties, she taught high-school English. In *Living In Oblivion* on p116, she writes about the terrifying reality of repeatedly drinking until she blacked out.

#ELLEBookClub pick: *The Art Of Memoir* by Mary Karr

@SARAHHEPOLA





HUNG VANNGO

Vietnamese-born, Canadian-raised make-up artist Hung created the 'no make-up' look on Lupita Nyong'o for this month's cover shoot on p126. It's his favourite for this season – 'or any season, for that matter'. His make-up pet hate is 'overly drawn lips and tons of lip gloss'. Despite being 'easy-going, calm and relaxed', Hung sums himself up with the hashtag #nevernotworking.

#ELLEBookClub pick: *The Artist's Way* by Julia Cameron

@HUNGVANNGO

VERNON FRANÇOIS

The Manchester-born, award-winning hairstylist's client list includes Kerry Washington, Lianne La Havas and our cover star, Lupita Nyong'o, who he describes as, 'the perfect canvas to demonstrate the versatility of Afro hair'. See his work on p126.

#ELLEBookClub pick: *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

@VERNONFRANCOIS



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'I say if I'm beautiful. I say if I'm strong. You will not determine my story – I will'

– AMY SCHUMER



RHYANNON STYLES

Performer, writer and musician, Rhyannon writes about her experience transitioning from male to female in her online column and video series for ELLE, The New Girl. As a founding member and collaborator of The LipSinkers, her career highlight is 'flying above the audience at the Roundhouse in Camden, dressed as a glam-rock vampire while lip-synching to *Poison* by Alice Cooper.' Read her moving essay on p112.

#ELLEBookClub pick: *Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides

@RHYANNONSTYLES



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JANUARY 2016











BEAUTY SCHOOL

Learn the art of perfect eyeliner application with Laura Mercier on p164, and find out what the new Friday-night hairstyle is on p163. Plus, the results are in for this year's International Beauty Awards (p154).

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WHAT ELLE WEARS

From the editors to the interns, see what we wear to work every week. Visit elleuk.com/street-style and let Team ELLE show you how to style the trends.

Compiled by: Gillian Brett. Photography: Jason Lloyd-Evans, Cleo Glover, Cameron McNee, Silvia Olsen.

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JANUARY

Something rather magical is happening in fashion: there is a gentle but significant new mood sweeping through design houses. It's rather wonderful to watch as the wispy tendrils of change softly embrace our creative world in such an unexpected way.

It started with Alessandro Michele's debut at Gucci in spring this year. Who would have thought that a) an unknown would have stepped into the hot seat at this Italian megabrand and b) his brilliant first collection, pulled together in a matter of weeks, would have featured what I am pretty sure is the first-ever Gucci bobble hat.



Michele's show was a delightful surprise; an exquisite and perfectly executed debut that captured the new mood of a moment with rare precision. His genius was to show beautifully crafted and unexpected creations, colours we felt we hadn't seen together before and soft, romantic textures with bold prints and tiny detailed accessories. And an aesthetic that also reflected the new gender-fluid mood. Who wouldn't want to be that spirited woman?

He created outfits and pieces women could wear in their own way. Referencing the Gucci archive heavily, Michele's idea was to rebirth it as something new. Few designers are skilled and brave enough to do that. He took the Gucci woman apart, and then put her back together again with a spirited individuality that will appeal to both an existing and a new audience. It was still sexy (god knows that when Gucci stops being sexy, we'll stop going to the shows), but with a fresh energy, full of modern femininity. We witnessed a similar revolution at Versace for SS16; this was my favourite Versace show ever.

There have been big changes across fashion as I write this letter. Raf Simons has left Dior after three years as its creative director, the inspiring Alber Elbaz has vacated Lanvin and Alexander Wang has stepped down from Balenciaga. All this movement will create a ripple effect of new thinking, and hopefully spotlight some new names, too. And because everyone is watching Michele, I suspect his curated and wonderfully democratic outlook will influence a new guard of individualists. I sense a remarkable era ahead, one that defines a new fashion voice where the brave and the remarkable shine.

Alongside this, there is a sea change in attitude to models on the catwalk – we are seeing more diversity at last. Lineisy Montero, a 19-year-old from the Dominican Republic, walked more SS16 shows than any other model, which is a first. We talk to her on p90. Bravo to those amazing designers championing her and leading the way.

This new mood – or the The New Cool as we're calling it at ELLE HQ – will no doubt filter across Hollywood and music, too. I am delighted to have Lupita Nyong'o as our cover star to mark her role in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*. Her story is uplifting and she exemplifies the spirit of the individual (p126).

So, I am in an upbeat mood for our January issue as it also marks another innovative first for ELLE. We have launched a new podcast series, called She Said, so you can tune in to ELLE as you travel to and from work. In one of the episodes, radio presenter Gemma Cairney interviews me about my career and the joys (ahem) of working at ELLE. Get this unique insight by downloading She Said (see p111 for details).



When you see this symbol, go to elleuk.com/podcasts

Lorraine

LORRAINE CANDY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Photography: Kai Z Feng.


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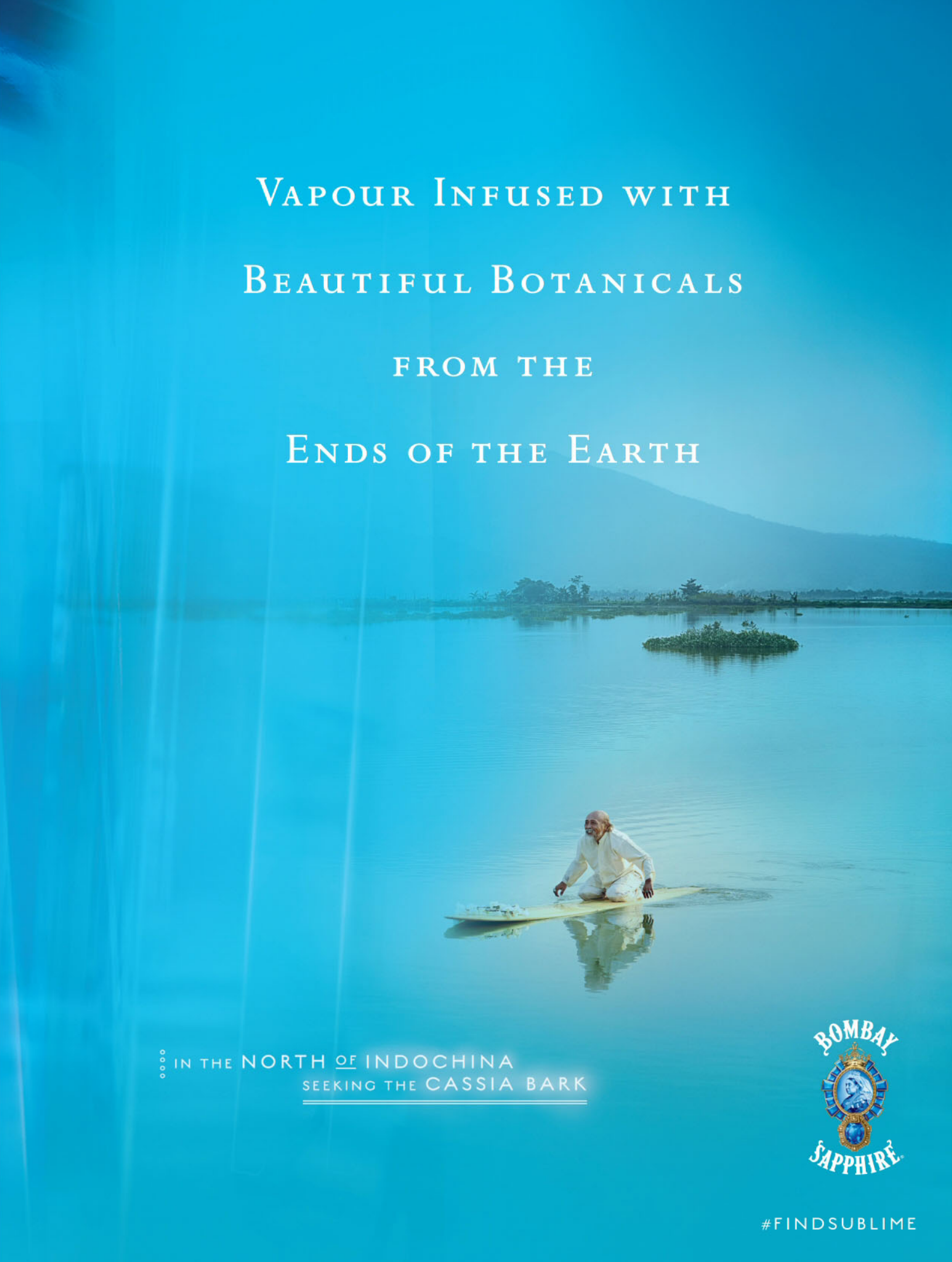


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discover your destiny & your month ahead

Forecast: The Saturn Sisters
Stefanie Iris Weiss
and **Sherene Schostak**
It's your birthday, Sagittarius!



SAGITTARIUS

23 NOVEMBER – 22 DECEMBER

Your month to: Make a list and check it twice

Dreams do come true during your birthday month. That goes double for Archers born within five days of 11 December, when the new moon reboots your entire life. Write down your wishes and desires: the stars should grant them within six months. The full moon on Christmas Day is cosy and a little bit sexy.

Date for your diary: 29th

You look good and feel better. Work it.

READ IT

Find out what your stars have in store at elleuk.com/horoscopes/daily

CAPRICORN

23 DECEMBER – 20 JANUARY

Your month to: Dream a little

Near the new moon on the 11th, your subconscious mind is trying to talk to you and you better pay attention. If you neglect or repress your emotions, it'll come back to bite you near Christmas. Take a spa retreat with your besties around the 25th, so relationship stresses don't overwhelm you.

Date for your diary: 9th

Don't bottle up your feelings.

AQUARIUS

21 JANUARY – 19 FEBRUARY

Your month to: Make friends

You are a networking machine at the moment. Set goals for the next six months and you could launch your Kickstarter campaign by May. When the full moon arrives on Christmas Day, you'll still be raring to go while your family and friends are in relaxation mode. New Year's Eve is sparkling, sexy and social.

Date for your diary: 15th

You rule the universe today.

PISCES

20 FEBRUARY – 20 MARCH

Your month to: Discover your true calling

December centres you, especially at work. The new moon on the 11th is all about refining your public persona and leaving your mark on the world. By the time the full moon arrives on Christmas Day, you're ready to kick back and have fun.

Date for your diary: 26th

Work the room.

ARIES

21 MARCH – 20 APRIL

Your month to: Travel

You're being called to far-flung places, and you'll definitely want your lover to tag along – or perhaps you'll meet them when you get there. If you can't get away before 2016, book an adventure for the first half of the year. Curl up with family on Christmas Day, when the full moon brings you all closer.

Date for your diary: 10th

Three words: Must. Do. Yoga.

TAURUS

21 APRIL – 21 MAY

Your month to: Know yourself

You're craving a hot love affair near the end of the year – possibly with your long-term partner. The new moon on the 11th offers a load of new ways to spice it up. The full moon coincides with Christmas this year, making the 25th the perfect day for sharing stories with the people you love – tell the whole truth.

Date for your diary: 23rd

You're super spendy; go with it.

GEMINI

22 MAY – 21 JUNE

Your month to: Be decisive

Relationships rule your world this month. Single? You could meet a potential partner around the new moon on the 11th. If you're in a relationship, you might have one of those 'Do I really want to be here?' moments near Christmas. Commit or quit to start the new year well.

Date for your diary: 6th

No bad vibes allowed.

CANCER

22 JUNE – 22 JULY

Your month to: Find balance

You're working up to the bitter end this month, while your colleagues slurp eggnog and OD on biscuits. The new moon on the 11th brings your projects to a climax, yet might also deliver some last-minute deadlines. By the time the full moon arrives on the 25th, you'll be more than ready to collapse onto the sofa – and stay there until the New Year.

Date for your diary: 21st

Make relationships your focus.

LEO

23 JULY – 23 AUGUST

Your month to: Bring joy

December is all about pleasure in the biggest, loudest way possible. Right now you just wanna have fun. Especially near the weekend of the 11th, when the new moon teaches you a lesson about the art of letting go. Your dreams are trying to tell you something on Christmas Day – listen closely.

Date for your diary: 7th

Focus on working hard.

VIRGO

24 AUGUST – 23 SEPTEMBER

Your month to: Go home

Loved ones are on your mind even before the holidays officially arrive. The new moon on the 11th offers a lovely opportunity to heal wounds with estranged family members. Have that talk even if it's tough to initiate. This is also the month to give your home a makeover.

Date for your diary: 17th

You're sexy and you know it.

LIBRA

24 SEPTEMBER – 23 OCTOBER

Your month to: Think smart

As the holidays approach, your mind is in overdrive with some seriously clever ideas – write them down. Some might call you bombastic, but brilliant would be more like it. The full moon arrives on Christmas Day, marking a high point for your career. Yes, even as you sit around opening presents.

Date for your diary: 19th

Be careful not to start a row.

SCORPIO

24 OCTOBER – 22 NOVEMBER

Your month to: Assess life

The year may be winding down but your financial prowess is totally heating up, especially near the new moon on the 11th. Focus on your budget and in six months' time you might have to diversify your millions. Get out of town on Christmas Day.

Date for your diary: 8th

Anything can happen, and it will – be prepared.

Photography: Jason Lloyd-Evans.

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Lupita Nyong'o

THE COVER BY NUMBERS

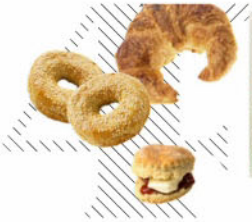
12 energetic people on set.







6 types of baked goods including bagels, scones, pound cakes, muffins, mini croissants and Danish pastries.



31 looks from Dolce & Gabbana, Chanel, Fausto Puglisi and Sonia Rykiel.

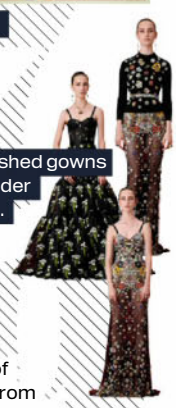




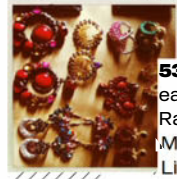
72 pairs of shoes by Sophia Webster, Tabitha Simmons and Christian Louboutin.



£52 worth of Chanel nail polish.

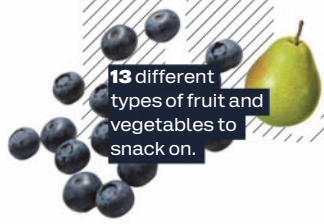


3 embellished gowns by Alexander McQueen.



53 pairs of earrings from Rachel Boston, Michelle Oh, Joomi Lim, Alexis Bittar, Paula Mendoza, and Ippolita.





13 different types of fruit and vegetables to snack on.



9 hours of shooting.

THE COVER-SHOOT PLAYLIST

Flawless by Beyoncé
I Wanna Dance With Somebody by Whitney Houston
Q.U.E.E.N. by Janelle Monáe (feat. Erykah Badu)

ELLE **HEAR IT** To listen to the songs from the shoot, follow ELLEUK on Spotify

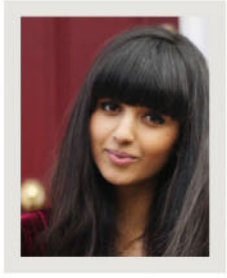
Turn to p126 to read our exclusive interview with Lupita

Compiled by: Claire Sibbick. Photography: Alamy, Benoît Audureau, Getty, Imaxtree.

WOMAN OF THE MONTH

DUNYA KAMAL

@DEAREST DEER_



Dunya, 24, manages the social media platforms at Amnesty International, where she is its Global Communities Officer. Before that, she was Global Social Media Assistant at Asos. She also writes a fashion blog, dearestdeer.net. Dunya lives in Hackney, London, with her grandmother

When my parents moved from Iraq to the UK in 1984, there was so much conflict happening there. I remember listening to my mum talking to her sisters about the bombings in 2003, when I was 11. I think that because I was exposed to those conversations at a young age, it made me inherently interested in politics.

My dream job was to be a lawyer. I even applied to study law when I was choosing universities, but had a change of heart and ended up studying International Relations with Spanish at the University of Sussex. I still think law is very interesting, so I won't scratch it off my list of things to do, but it won't be for a few years.

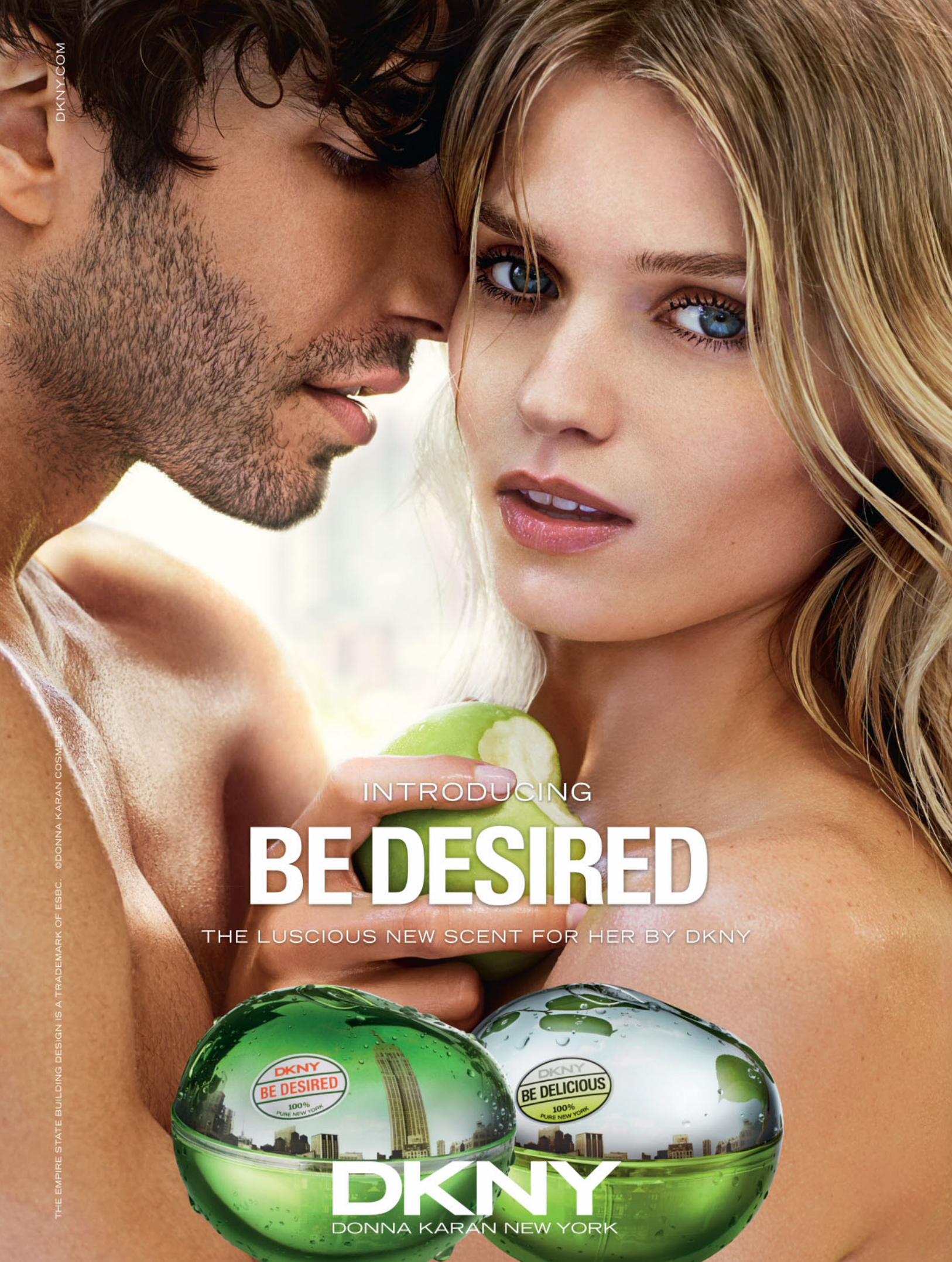
I'm pretty sure I got the job at Asos because of my lifestyle blog, dearestdeer.net. Asos was impressed by the fact I'd built an online community base out of nothing, and maintained a long relationship with my readers.

I admire fashion bloggers such as Wish Wish Wish, What Olivia Did…, I Want You To Know and Shiny Thoughts!. They all have a great work ethic and care about their readers.

I met my current boss at a social media conference, then sent her a DM on Twitter asking to meet to find out more about the non-profit sector. This meant she knew my name when I applied for a job, giving me an edge over others.

People may wonder what good a Facebook share can do, but we've had posts that have reached 1.5 million people on social media – such as our SOS Europe campaign [to protect peoples' lives and rights along Europe's borders]. When [a campaign] has done well, it's amazing.

Fashion and human rights are my two biggest passions. I couldn't give up either of them, so I would only blog full-time if there was a way to incorporate human rights into fashion – maybe ethical fashion? Or closing down all the world's sweatshops, one country at a time… It would have to be some kind of utopian dream career.


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Right now, the pre-spring collections are dropping in stores. These clothes are the ultra-accessible precursors to the catwalk looks that arrive later in the season. They point to the runway trends to come, so whatever you buy now should not only meet your current wardrobe needs, but take you through summer and beyond. This is our guide to what to invest in...

THE BEST OF THE PRE-SPRING TRENDS

What to buy and how to wear it, now and right through to summer

FIRST look ELLE

Photography: Courtesy of Stella McCartney.

Words **Rebecca Lowthorpe**
Fashion **Michelle Duguid, Billie Bhatia, Felicity Kay, Emi Papanikola**

1. Wool jumper, £49, Gap. 2. Cotton jacket, £350, MM6. 3. Leather trainers, £45, Miss KG. 4. Leather jacket, £1,600, Jonathan Saunders. 5. Cotton shirt, £200, See By Chloé. 6. Faux-leather shoes, £30, Next. 7. Cotton skirt, £270, Carven. 8. Silk-mix trousers, £280, Markus Lupfer













RIVALS

Power VS Powder

Brights or pastels, your wardrobe needs colour!

Colour is the smart way to bring cheer and confidence to your look mid-winter. One splash is all it takes. **How to wear it now:** Happily, with what's already in your closet: black, grey and navy. **How to wear it later:** Pastels look great with metallic highlights. Offset power shades with denim.













9. Wool coat, £180, Banana Republic. 10. Acetate sunglasses, £170, Preen. 11. Viscose jumpsuit, £160, Whistles. 12. Leather shoes, £100, Carvela. 13. Suede shoes, £125, Karen Millen. 14. Leather skirt, £449, By Malene Birger. 15. Wool dress, £99, Finery. 16. Wool dress, £570, Red Valentino



1. Cotton jacket, £365, and matching trousers, both £229, Paul Smith. 2. Leather shoes, £185, Russell & Bromley. 3. Silk-mix jacket, £950, and matching trousers, £495, both Mulberry

4. Leather shoes, £68, Office. 5. Polyester-mix jacket, £55, and matching trousers, £30, both Asos

FIRST look

CHRISTOPHER KANE

HEROES

Suits you

The new tailoring favours colour and texture over strict masculine cuts

MULBERRY

Get ahead of the move towards looser, softer tailoring with these effortless wear-any-day clothes. **How to wear it now:** Layered together. Note: trousers are getting wider, shoulders softer, and a neat polo neck is your wonder piece. **How to wear it later:** Wear over a crisp striped shirt. Add trainers for a sporty edge. ›

6. Silk-mix jacket, £359, and matching trousers, £289, Dagmar. 7. Wool-mix jacket, £140, and matching trousers, £85, both French Connection. 8. Leather trainers, £395, Alexander McQueen. 9. Polyester-mix jacket, £60, and matching trousers, £35, both River Island. 10. Suede bag, £65, Dune

Photography: 3 Objectives.

FIRST look

1. Cotton-mix dress, £420, Diesel Black Gold. 2. Cotton top, £340, Carven. 3. Cotton-mix dress, £250, Self-Portrait. 4. Leather trainers, £125, MICHAEL Michael Kors. 5. Cotton trousers, £300, Rebecca Taylor. 6. Cotton skirt, £255, See By Chloé. 7. Polyester jacket, £49, Dorothy Perkins



8. Cotton-mix dress, £45, Next. 9. Leather shoes, £125, Hudson. 10. Cotton dress, £299, Karen Millen. 11. Cotton top, £245, Vince. 12. Leather boots, £85, Warehouse. 13. Cotton dress, £595, Temperley London

Lace up

How to add the season's most romantic fabric to an urban wardrobe

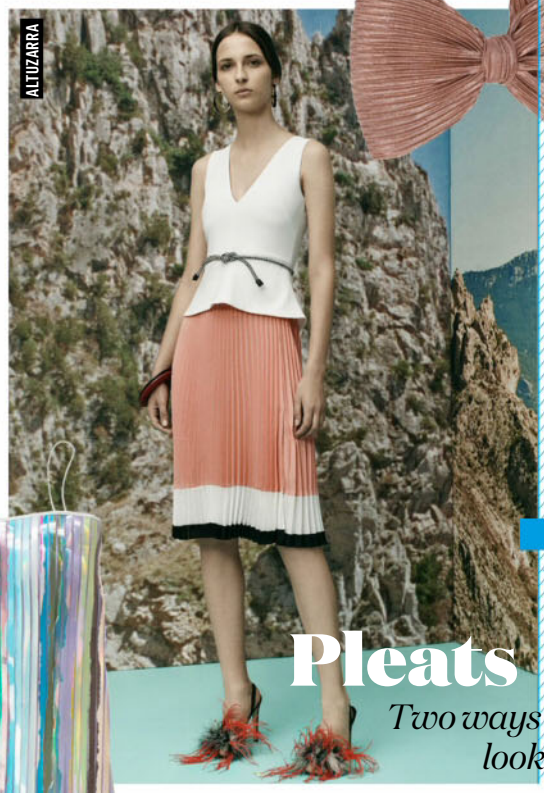
Easy to fall for, but not so easy to wear, lace in all its forms (whisker-fine to open-weave macramé) can look brilliant. **How to wear it now:** Try dresses as tops over smart denim or masculine trousers. **How to wear it later:** Bare summer legs. Always apply the non-pretty footwear rule: sneakers or chunky boots.

RIVALS

Pleats VS Ruffles

Two ways to update your look with new details

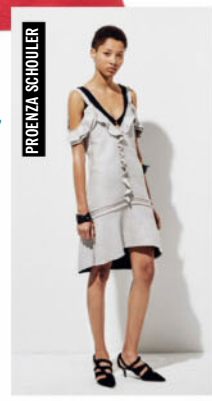
For surface detail, make it ruffled or pleated. Both are big for summer, giving a nod to the season's quirky romance vibe.
How to wear it now: Sparingly. Put a skinny polo neck under those ruffles. Add a chunkier knit to pleats.
How to wear it later: Stick to the one ruffled piece. Mini pleats look great all over, but make this your mantra: simple shapes! ›



1. Polyester headband, £10, Topshop.
2. Cotton skirt, £350, Marques'Almeida.
3. Cotton top, £350, Karen Walker



4. Cotton shirt, £375, McQ. 5. Cotton dress, £297, Trademark. 6. Polyester top, £160, Designers Remix. 7. Acrylic jumper, £52, Topshop





























12. Polyester skirt, £49.50, Twiggy for Marks & Spencer. 13. Polyester top, £89, John Lewis. 14. Leather sandals, £99, Finery. 15. Acrylic dress, £905, Ellery

8. Cotton skirt, £245, Trademark. 9. Leather boots, £875, J.W.Anderson. 10. Polyester top, £40, Next. 11. Polyester dress, £250, L.K.Bennett

Photography: 3 Objectives.

RIVALS

Stripes VS Flowers

When it comes to prints, go linear or floral

Sartorially speaking, we're in the age of the fashion individualist, hence the power of print to personalise an outfit. **How to wear it now:** With your faithful black polo neck. Prints are a great way to inject simple shapes with a unique twist. **How to wear it later:** With a black T-shirt or white shirt. Just the one floral piece, ditsy or big splashy blooms, will do it.

1 & 3. Leather boots, £350, and leather belt, £85, both L.K.Bennett. 2. Polyester trousers, £24, Dorothy Perkins. 4. Silk dress, £120, Warehouse

5. Leather dress, £995, Topshop. 6. Leather bag, £350, House Of Holland. 7. Silk top, £295, Mother Of Pearl. 8. Cotton skirt, £210, Carven. 9. Leather sandals, £445, Tabitha Simmons

13. Suede trainers, £520, Laurence Dacade. 14. Viscose-mix dress, £150, Diesel. 15. Cotton-mix skirt, £45, Oasis

10. Leather sandals, £695, Paul Andrew. 11. Viscose-mix skirt, £535, Caterina Gatta. 12. Viscose coat, £299, Karen Millen

FIRST look

1. Leather bag, £59.99, H&M. 2 & 3. Leather sandals, £95, and metal necklace, £29, both Finery. 4. Wool dress, £45, River Island. 5. Leather trainers, £129, Ash



HEROES

Hang loose

The new silhouette is looser, softer and coming to your knitwear essentials

These are your wardrobe building blocks – they go with anything, any season. Chose easy, neutral shades.
How to wear it now: With a flash of metallic, block heel and charcoal rib tights.
How to wear it later: With crisp white trainers and a cool statement bag.

10. Cotton dress, £500, Equipment. 11 & 12. Wool-mix skirt, £279, and matching top, £199, both By Malene Birger. 13 & 14. Viscose top and matching trousers, both £100, both Ganni

6. Lurex dress, £65, French Connection. 7. Silk-mix trousers, £690, Issey Miyake. 8. Leather shoes, £58, Topshop. 9. Wool coat, £135, Warehouse

Photography: 3 Objectives, Monica-Feudi/Feudi Guaineri. For shopping details, see Address Book.

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THE TREND

Finishing touches

*Now inject a hit of **personality** into your style with these **playful**, quirky and **bold** pieces that will take you through SS16 and beyond. Just in case you didn't get the memo: fashion is ready to **have fun** again*

Styling **Donna Wallace**
Photography **Luke J Albért**

SHOP IT
For more of Donna's new-season accessory picks, go to elleuk.com/fashion

1 POP ART



1. Leather shoes, £550, Prada. Perspex earrings, £7.99, H&M. **2.** Red leather bag, £150, Karen Millen. Striped brass bag, £995, Anya Hindmarch. **3.** Faux-leather shoes, £665, Stella McCartney

2 POWER SHADES



3 GLITTER



4 BUCKET BAGS



4. Leather bag, £3,200, Dior. **5.** Silver leather shoes, £250, L.K.Bennett. Pink leather sandals, £380, Gucci. Red and gold leather sandals, £555, Miu Miu. **6.** Faux-leather shoes, £48, Topshop. Leather bag, £1,860, Valentino. Brass and glass earrings, £88, J.Crew

5 METALLIC SHOES



6 PRETTY LADY



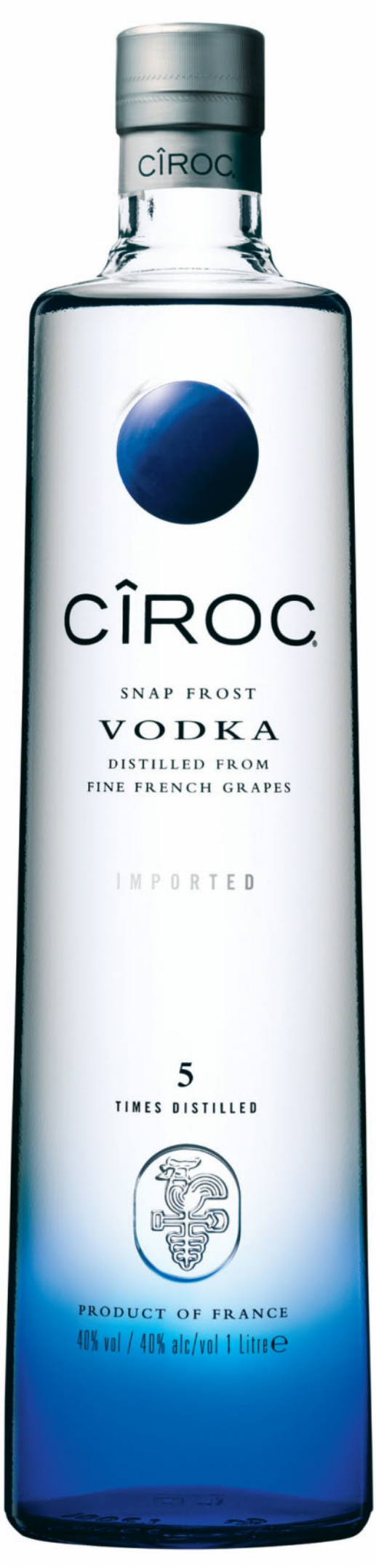
For shopping details, see Address Book.



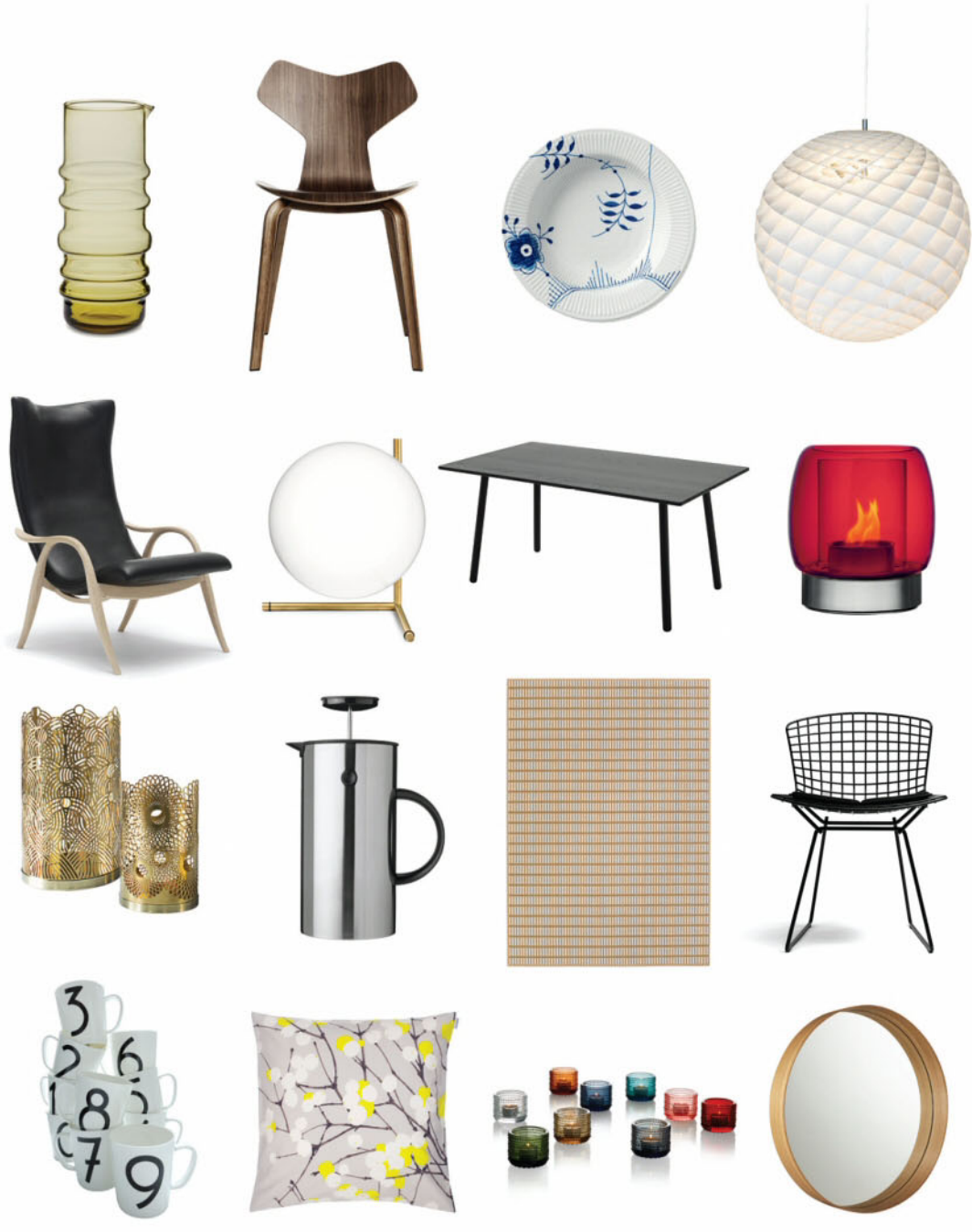
On Arrival

Johannes Huebl photographed over the Alps
exclusively for Cîroc Vodka—Austria


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Left to right **1** Socks rolled down pitcher by Marimekko **2** Grand Prix™ chair by Fritz Hansen **3** Blue fluted mega plate by Royal Copenhagen **4** Patera pendant lamp by Louis Poulsen **5** CH429 signature chair by Carl Hansen **6** IC T2 table lamp by Flos **7** Georg dining table by Skagerak **8** Kaasa fireplace by Iittala **9** London Candleholder by Lara Bohinc for Skultuna **10** EM Press coffee maker by Stelton **11** New York rug by Woodnotes **12** Bertoia outdoor side chair by Knoll **13** Isokon Gallery mug by Skandium **14** Lumimarja cushion by Marimekko **15** Kastehelmi votive by Iittala **16** Lumi mirror by Skandium

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HOW TO WEAR

The loose trouser

Step away from your skinny jeans. It's all about a softer silhouette this season

Styling **Harriet Stewart**

Wool trousers, £300, Creatures of Comfort. Cotton jumper (around shoulders), £109, Baum Und Pferdgarten. Viscose jumper, £36, Topshop. Cotton-mix jumper (worn underneath), £28, River Island. Leather sandals, £515, Tabitha Simmons. Perspex earrings, £45, Tatty Devine. Model's left hand: Gold heart ring (index finger), £50, and gold circle ring (middle finger), £45, Pandora. Model's right hand: Gold ring with white gems (index finger), £315, Pandora. Rose-gold-plated rings (middle finger), £75 for pack of four, Folli Follie



Choose fine-ribbed knits in a complementary colour palette and layer several on top of each other

Knitted trousers aren't the easiest thing to get right, but a graduated flare and chunky wedges will elongate your legs

Photography: Cameron McNee.

HOW TO WEAR

The loose trouser



Cotton trousers, £275, Atea Oceanie. Cotton shirt, £20, Next. Leather skirt, £275, Topshop Unique. Leather trainers, £125, MICHAEL Michael Kors. Perspex earrings, £25, Tatty Devine. Sterling silver chain, £45, sterling silver round pendant, £75, and sterling silver long pendant, £55, all Links Of London. Model's ring finger: Sterling silver and black cubic zirconia feather ring, £69, Sif Jakobs. Silver ring, £12 for set of six, Accessorize. Model's middle finger: Silver and diamante ring, £55, Ernest Jones. Model's index finger: Gold-plated crystal ring, £160, Atelier Swarovski. Leather bag, £79, Russell & Bromley

Layer this season's button-through skirts over loose trousers. Finish with a mannish shirt (worn backwards if you dare) to complete the tomboy look

Photography: Cameron McNee. Additional photography: 3 Objectives. Hair and make-up: Martina Lattanzi at One Represents using Tom Ford Beauty and Aveda. Manicure: Roxanne Campbell using Morgan Taylor Nail Lacquer. Model: Twiga Mermet at Premier Model Management. For shopping details, see Address Book.

EDITOR'S FAVOURITES



Cotton, £115, Cos



Polyester, £38, River Island



Satin, £79, Finery



Viscose, £249, By Malene Birger



Wool-mix, £185, Designers Remix



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Nouveau Nineties

Hedi Slimane's *pre-spring* Saint Laurent riffs on *surf grunge*. Wear with a stomp and a scowl

Styling **Donna Wallace** Photography **Luke J Albért**

Clockwise, from top: Leather-mix bag, £1,095, leather boots, £625, gold necklace, £235, metal brooch, £195, and acetate sunglasses, £300, all Saint Laurent by Hedi Slimane



ADD TO BASKET

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For shopping details, see Address Book.

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HOW TO SHOP THE SALES *like a fashion insider*

*There is a **fine art** to finding stylish bargains when the **January sales** hit. Let these experts **make it easy***

Compiled by **Harriet Stewart**

Love them or loathe them, the January sales are the best time to inject something new into your wardrobe – and right before that all-too-familiar end-of-season fatigue kicks in.

But before you start, it's important to think carefully about what you want to achieve. Are you looking for that 'wow' piece to wear on New Year's Eve, an evergreen investment bag, or do you need to refresh your basics? Perhaps you just *have* to have those trend-led pom-pom shoes that you've seen on every hot list since September. Follow our experts' tips, pinpoint the gaps in your wardrobe and go with a game plan. Strategy is everything.

EXPERTS' TIPS



Donna Wallace, Accessories Editor
Scout out what you want before the sales begin. Try it on and know which size you need, so you won't have to waste precious time queueing for the changing room. If you're planning to do your shopping online, double-check that you are able to return items if you change your mind about them.

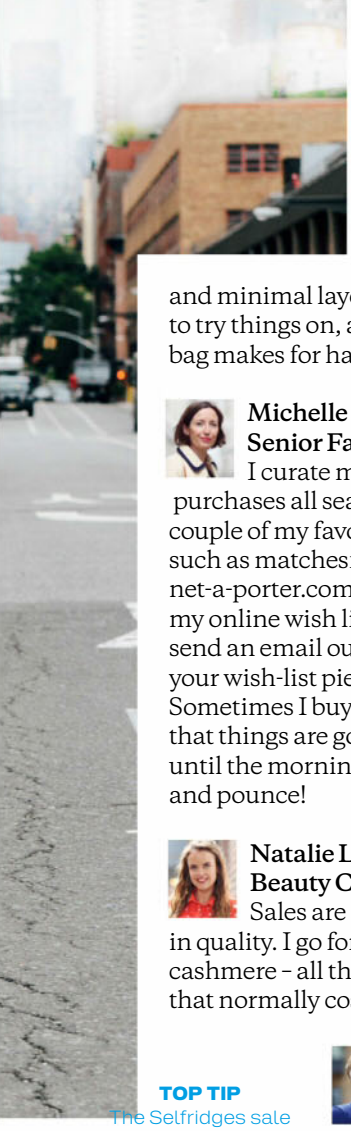
TOP TIP
Check out the loyalty schemes at your favourite department stores. They often entitle you to an early sale preview before anyone else.



Felicity Kay, Fashion Assistant
Some shops put their sales stock in store a day or two before advertised because they can't get all the items on the shop floor overnight. For this reason, it's worth checking in a day or two earlier than the actual start date if there is something specific you're after.



Billie Bhatia, Fashion Assistant
Dress for the sales: slip-on shoes



and minimal layers for when you need to try things on, and a cross-body bag makes for hands-free browsing.

Michelle Duguid, Senior Fashion Editor
I curate my perfect sale purchases all season on a couple of my favourite websites, such as matchesfashion.com and net-a-porter.com, and store them in my online wish list. The websites always send an email out to alert you when your wish-list pieces have gone on sale. Sometimes I buy at that point (if I know that things are going to sell out) or I wait until the morning of the final reduction and pounce!

Natalie Lukaitis, Beauty Contributor
Sales are my time to invest in quality. I go for silk, leather and cashmere – all the beautiful fabrics that normally cost a fortune.

TOP TIP
The Selfridges sale starts online before it does in store – perfect for post-Christmas hibernation.



Anne-Marie Curtis, Fashion Director
Just because it's a bargain, doesn't mean you should buy it. I always go through my wardrobe mentally and ask myself, 'What would I wear this with?' If I can't think of anything, then it stays on the rail.



Kenya Hunt, Acting Content Director
Don't be the impatient shopper who buys something in a second-choice colour if the shade or style you want is sold out, rather than searching for the first choice at other places. I've been there – it's better to look for the style you truly love. And many e-commerce newsletter algorithms are based on your purchase history, so pay attention to those to see what's new in from the brands you shop the most.



Kirsty Dale, Executive Fashion Director
I often get lucky shopping outside of central London, hunting down pieces that will usually sell out in the main branches of a store, but that you can often find in the regional locations. And I always 'up shop', looking at the brands and labels I love but usually can't afford, rather than wasting time hunting through rails in stores I shop in more regularly. When all else fails, I end up in the underwear section – a new bra or pyjamas are fail-safe sale-pleasers.



Hannah Swerling, Senior Commissioning Editor
I use the sales to stock up on clothes for work. My top tip is to sit down in the changing room when you're trying things on. That way you know that what you're buying is comfortable for all those hours spent desk-bound.



FASHION BUYERS' TIPS

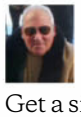
Alannah Sparks, Fashion Editor at farfetch.co.uk
Use the discounts to capitalise on those basics with a twist. Look for subtle subversions that only high-end designs produce, and look ahead to next season, too. For example, this season's ultra-frou-frou pieces (ruffles, organza, Victorian flounce) will still be relevant for SS16, worn with no make-up, boyish flats and a bit of black leather to cut across the sweetness.



Melissa McGinnis, Buyer for Designer RTW, Selfridges
Know what you want. If you're looking for a bag, head straight to the accessories department, and get there as early as possible. This is more often than not the busiest department.



Laura Larbalestier, Buying Director at Browns
Shop with a clear idea of what you need, what you've had your eye on during the season and what your total budget is. Certain categories are always worth investing in, namely knitwear, coats and jackets.



Scott Tepper, Fashion Buying Director at Liberty
Get a size up, if necessary, to score your dream piece. That last black Roland Mouret dress may be two sizes too big for you, but a good seamstress can fit it to your proportions.



IF YOU SEE IT, BUY IT



Coach boots
These are not only practical (think ahead to that February cold snap), they were also a hero from the AW15 collections.



Gucci bird bag
If there is one brand you should buy into now, it's Gucci. This bag hints at the highly acclaimed SS16 collection and the new Gucci girl we all want to be. It would be a sure-fire sale win.



Victoria Beckham coat
Nothing says investment piece like a camel coat. VB would wear hers with leather trousers and stilettos.



Saint Laurent bucket bag
Bucket bag mania is showing no signs of waning next season. Saint Laurent's version is a classic and a purchase you won't regret.



Nicholas Kirkwood shoes
Take it from us, silver is big news for spring. On shoes, bags, everything. Get on board now.

Photography: Victoria Adamson, Joe Harper, Charlotte MacPherson at Anthea Simms, Sophie Mhabille, Anthea Simms, Tommy Ton/Trunk Archive.

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DONNA'S DETAILS

Colour blocking, glasses on chains and a cool new collaboration. These are the pieces to take note of, says Accessories Editor Donna Wallace

1 TWO TONE

STARTING BLOCKS
As powerful as the colour movement in accessories has become, sometimes one shade just isn't enough. For the one-colour commitment-phobes, the season is full of multi-way and tonal combo pieces. Basically, anything goes – as long as it isn't black.



Donna wears: Cotton shirt, £220, Acne Studios. Wool-mix top (worn underneath), £19.99, Zara. Cotton dungarees, £315, Levi's. Leather boots, £572, Mary Katrantzou. Leather bag, £2,500, Christian Dior. Earring, Donna's own



Leather bag, £1,285, Ferragamo



Leather shoes, £95, Finery



Acetate sunglasses, £330, Cutler And Gross



Faux-leather bag, £69, Dune



2 THE EYES HAVE IT

CHAINED TO YOU
First spotted as a micro trend in SS14, and now worn boldly on the Gucci catwalk, we can now finally talk about eyeglass chains. Go on, embrace your inner glam-ma.



From top: Acetate glasses, £212, Burberry. Gold chain, £75, Frame Chain. Acetate glasses, £244, Dolce & Gabbana. Gold-plated chain, £108, Maria Black

3 PIECE BY PIECE



From right: Gold and pearl earring, £520, and gold and pearl earring, £385, both sacaisophiebillebrahe



Denim jacket, £35, Monki. Wool-mix top, as before. Gold and pearl earring, £750, sacaisophiebillebrahe

GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING
Clearly, we are not the only ones who love everything Sophie Bille Brahe creates. Sophiscated splicer Sacai has collaborated with the jeweller to create a collection reworking her signature pieces.



Above: Denim jacket, as before. Gold and pearl earring, £490, sacaisophiebillebrahe

Words and styling: Donna Wallace. Photography: 3 Objectives, Victoria Adamson. For shopping details, see Address Book.



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IN STORE

06.12.15

WHISTLES
Denim jacket, £120, and denim skirt, £95

FIRST look

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Available exclusively at selfridges.co.uk. For shopping details, see Address Book.

Styling **Harriet Stewart** Photography **Luke Kirwan**


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A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME – WITH RIMOWA

The 1920s marked the beginning of modern air travel and the golden age of Hollywood. In 1919, Hugo Junkers presented the world's first all-metal commercial aircraft. It was made using the aircraft aluminum alloy discovered by Alfred Wilm in 1906. In 1950, RIMOWA presented its suitcase with the unmistakable grooved design made of the same material – at the time, it was the lightest suitcase in the world. RIMOWA was a real pioneer in the sector, starting the trend for lightweight luggage back then.



www.rimowa.com



LA **BELLA** VITA

Not content with taking over our wardrobes, **Bella Freud** has designs on our entire home. For her latest coup, the purveyor of logo-embroidered wool sweaters, is opening her first bricks-and-mortar store, where she will unveil a range of soft furnishings, including super-soft merino-wool scatter cushions and cosy throws. *The Bella Freud flagship opens in December at 49 Chiltern Street, London W1U 6LY. Prices start at £160*



Merino-wool cushions, £160 each, both Bella Freud

Welcome to Wonderland

Call it Marc by Marc Jacobs' final hurrah (now that it has been rolled into the mainline collection), or a celebration of women who are just that little bit different. This one-off **MBMJ capsule collection**, in collaboration with Disney, is based on the classic 1951 film version of *Alice In Wonderland*. Aptly titled **'I Am Not Like Other Girls'**, it includes totes, sunglasses, backpacks and T-shirts stamped with original *Alice In Wonderland* sketches. What a great final blast of MBMJ girl power creativity. *Available at Marc Jacobs, from £63*



THE TREND



Clockwise from top: Leather and canvas trainers, £80. Leather and canvas boots, £110. Leather and canvas sandals, £80. All Clarks x Christopher Raeburn

URBAN *explorers*

Introducing Clarks x Christopher Raeburn's new collaboration

Borneo is the theme of Christopher Raeburn's first collaboration with Clarks, which debuted on the British designer's SS16 runway. Raeburn, who originally made his mark as a menswear designer, pays homage to legendary anthropologist Tom Harrison, with shoes that riff on Raeburn's urban-utilitarian style mixed with Clarks' classic simplicity. Each pair is made from diverse materials, including webbing, cork and recycled ethylene-vinyl acetate (a dense, durable, eco-friendly foam), and stamped with the image of an orangutan, now only native to Borneo and Sumatra. Wear with a fearless 'tude. *Available at clarks.com, from £70-£110*

Words: Billie Bhatia. Gillian Brett. Photography: 3 Objectives, Getty, Instagram/SukiWaterhouse, Rex Features, Neil Watson. For shopping details, see Address Book.

FIRST look



Silk top, £625, and matching skirt, £465, both Protagonist. Suede sandals, price on request, Manolo Blahnik for Protagonist. Below: Linen dress, £730, Protagonist. Suede sandals, price on request, Manolo Blahnik for Protagonist



TAKE THE LEAD

WITH ITS SIMPLE SELF-ASSURED STAPLES, NEW LABEL **PROTAGONIST** IS YOUR WARDROBE'S RISING STAR

If you love the sleek simplicity of brands such as Céline and The Row but weep at the prices, put Protagonist in your diary for a payday spree. Born in 2013 as a shirting brand exclusive to chic US e-commerce site The Line, Protagonist has evolved into a full ready-to-wear label that can now be found at Net-A-Porter and Joseph – and in the possession of Dakota Johnson and Lily Aldridge.

There aren't many new labels that break through so fast, or can boast such a meteoric rise. So why is Protagonist turning every fashion insider's head? 'It's about making more with less,' says Alex Eagle, Creative Director of The Store x Soho House Berlin, who placed an order upon first sight in New York. 'There are no grandiose statements, just some rare details, such as the triple-cuffed shirts and slit polo-neck sweaters.'

For spring, Collection No. 6 – all self-assured, super-neat and subtly sexy staples – was presented via a stylised lookbook, featuring Prada darling Amanda Murphy, instead of a traditional catwalk show. Taking cues from the Olsens and Phoebe Philo, Protagonist gives new relevance to classic styles: the versatile silk pyjama tops give off work-appropriate polish but look just as good shrugged on over jeans, and the hemlines on the slit-to-there skirts are wide enough to accommodate a dash for the bus. The design team – who have taken on a collective anonymous front since founder and head designer Kate Wendelborn left this year – wanted to get back to the brand's original raison d'être. 'The process for the studio team is less about a theme and more about the woman,' explains Protagonist (and Balenciaga) stylist Vanessa Traina. 'This season, they explored the idea of a more sensual leading lady.'

Attitude is key; these are clothes for busy women bombing about the city wearing trainers with everything, but who still want to look pulled together. Easy elegance equals style nirvana; let the crush commence. *Available at Net-A-Porter, from £195*

ELLE **SEE IT** For more labels we love, visit elleuk.com/fashion

ON POINT *Salvatore Ferragamo X Edgardo Osorio*

Italian shoe specialist **Salvatore Ferragamo** has a long-standing history of nurturing emerging designers and this season the brand has collaborated with Edgardo Osorio. Edgardo, better known as the man behind the famous Aquazzura lace-ups (trust us, you have seen them everywhere), has remodelled the signature Ferragamo footwear with unexpected materials and playful details, such as bows, lace and polka dots, in a range of 11 styles. We want them all, and so will you.





Available at ferragamo.com. Prices from £545

Words: Billie Bhatia, Gillian Brett. Photography: 3 Objectives, Jonathan Nesteruk, Neil Watson. For shopping details, see Address Book.

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Your need-to-know guide to the most inspiring podcasts of the moment

Just when you thought it couldn't get any better than *Serial*, the world of podcasts blew up with all sorts of amazing stories to download. Last year, subscriptions to audio shows on iTunes reached one billion and, according to RawVoice, the number of unique monthly podcast listeners has tripled in the last five years to 75 million.

It's a real movement. And now, ELLE is involved. This issue kicks off our first-ever ELLE podcast series, She Said, a bi-weekly discussion covering what's trending right now. For more on how to download them, see p111. And while you're listening, check out these audio shows we're addicted to.



CALL YOUR GIRLFRIEND

Who you're listening to: *New York Magazine* writer Ann Friedman and fellow writer Aminatou Sow.
What it's about: Ann and her long-distance bestie Aminatou dial in from opposite coasts of the US for this bi-weekly show. The format is a freewheeling conversation – like any phone chat with an old pal – that covers subjects as diverse as emojis, Beyoncé and Hillary Clinton. In short: it's your life in podcast form.
When to tune in: If you're ever missing a friend.



MY DAD WROTE A PORNO

Who you're listening to: BBC Radio 1 DJ and ELLE Contributing Editor Alice Levine, joined by film director Jamie Morton and TV Producer James Cooper.
What it's about: Alice and friends come together to dissect Jamie's dad's book – a self-published erotic novel called *Belinda Blinked*. Warning: you will laugh until you cry. 'The majority of people listen on headphones, while on their commute or walking around the supermarket,' says Alice. 'So there's an intimacy there that's unique.'
When to tune in: When you want some light relief.



HAPPIER

Who you're listening to: Author Gretchen Rubin and her sister, TV writer and producer Elizabeth Craft.
What it's about: As the bestselling author of *The Happiness Project* and *Better Than Before*, Gretchen knows how to transmit feel-good vibes. This podcast is a mix of practical advice and personal life experiences. Elizabeth joins her to provide some straight-talking to stop things turning too saccharin.
When to tune in: On a Monday morning, or when you're feeling miserable.

SLATE'S DOUBLEX GABFEST

Who you're listening to: *New York Magazine* Senior Editor Noreen Malone, *The End Of Men* author Hanna Rosin and *Slate*'s culture critic June Thomas
What it's about: A feminist critique of trending topics and news, with lots of laughs, and geeky facts.
When to tune in: On your commute, to arrive at work smarter.

BONNIE & MAUDE

Who you're listening to: *Another Round* producer Eleanor Kagan and *I Love Bad Movies* creator Kseniya Yarosh.
What it's about: Love culture? Download this from two smart women discussing film and TV – from *The Craft* (below) to *RuPaul's Drag Race* – from a female-centric perspective.
When to tune in: A Tuesday-night TV alternative.

SERIAL

Who you're listening to: Sarah Koenig, producer at *This American Life*
What it's about: Over 68 million of us were glued to Sarah's detailed re-examination of the 1999 murder of Hae Min Lee. The second season focuses on Bowe Bergdahl, a US Army sergeant captured by the Taliban.
When to tune in: It's addictive, so whenever you can.



she said **LISTEN** to Team ELLE's new audio show at elleuk.com/podcasts

Words: Lena de Casparis. Photography: firstVIEW.com, Getty, Rex.

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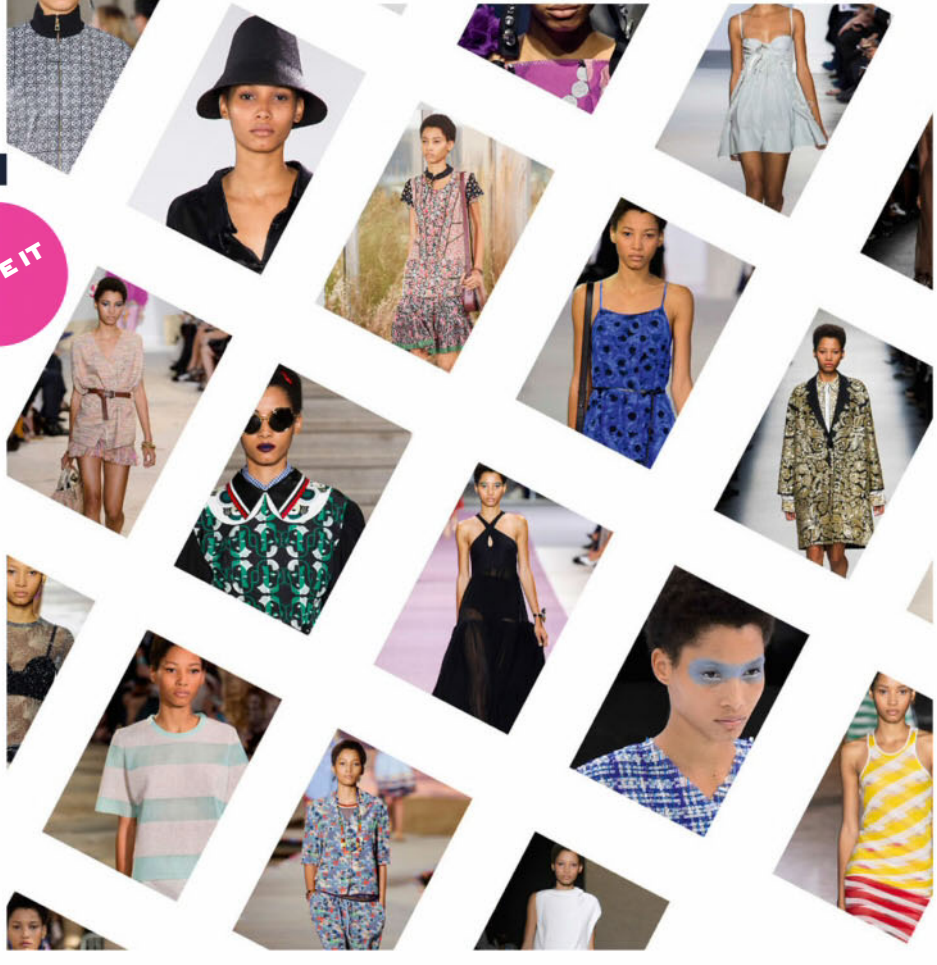
Lineisy Montero *walked more shows than any other model during SS16 and is being hailed as the face of a new fashion and cultural moment. Get to know the rising catwalk phenomenon in her first major interview, exclusively for ELLE*

Words **Andrew Barker**
Executive Editor, Business of Fashion

FIRST LOOK

LOVE IT

On 10 February 2015, Lineisy Montero left the Dominican Republic on an Air Europa flight to make her debut on the catwalk. She sat in an economy seat, 12B, with only a 10kg carry-on bag. It was her first time on a plane but, little did she know, by the end of the year she would be the woman who defined an entire catwalk season.



We chat on the phone in her mother tongue, Spanish, the night before she walks in the Chanel show, traditionally the most grand and storied of the catwalk season. It's her first major interview for a fashion magazine. She's on the final straight of fashion month and the 19-year-old model cannot wait to fly home at the end of the week.

'I miss the beach, the heat, the food and my family,' she says in her lilting, Caribbean-Hispanic accent.

During the SS16 shows in September, only her second round of Fashion Weeks, Lineisy appeared on 68 catwalks. What makes this number even more impressive is that she opened five, including Jason Wu, one of the biggest tickets in New York, taking what is essentially the most important spot on a runway. All of those impressive stats sealed her place as the top walker of the season, making her the first model of colour to have ever done so.

Now based in Paris full-time, Lineisy is the model everyone is talking about. 'In the same way Kate, Gisele, Freja and Anja all defined their times, Lineisy will likely define the current era,' says casting director Angus Munro. 'It's not often I see a woman who is so special. She has immaculate proportions. She can literally wear anything and make it look expensive and desirable.' When she smiles (which she does a lot) she reveals a slight gap in her front teeth that adds to her much-celebrated, unique charm. And her hairstyle, a cropped midi-Afro, has played its part in making her the face of the most diverse and inclusive moment fashion has seen in decades.

'She is a supermodel in the making,' says Carine Roitfeld, who featured

Photography: Alamy, Getty, Imaxtree. Lineisy is represented by Next Models

Lineisy in the latest edition of her magazine, *CR Fashion Book*. 'Her look is so unique. Her hair is proof that more and more, what is beautiful is what is natural. I knew she would be the next big thing.'

Fame has come suddenly to Lineisy and she's had to work fast to keep up with it: she's currently learning to speak English through an app.

Growing up in Santo Domingo, the capital of the Dominican Republic, Lineisy's childhood was spent in a tight-knit family. 'We were always together,' she explains. When home, she stays in the same house she grew up in with her mother, Enercida, who is studying accounting, and her two younger siblings (she has a further four half-siblings on her father's side). And when she travels, she finds herself craving a bowl of her mother's arroz con leche, a kind of rice pudding that reminds her of the comfort of home.

Lineisy's mother raised her alone (her parents are separated) but she is in touch with her father, a tailor. She didn't receive any fashion tutelage from him beyond an unsuccessful sewing lesson. In fact, she is still trying to work out whether her own look is more biker or boho. 'I was never really into fashion. My style is relaxed. It depends on how I feel on the day. Normally boots, trousers, a coat.'

Lineisy was first spotted in an amusement park, aged 14, by a scout from Ossygeno, a local model agency. But her mother forbid it. She was eventually allowed to sign with Next (the top agency that handles Alexa Chung, Arizona Muse and Binx Walton) at the end of 2014. Just months later she made her Prada debut in Milan, the only model in a 41-look show not to receive a topknot ponytail from hair god Guido Palau. While the other black models in the show, Aya Jones and Amilna Estevao, swished their way down the Prada catwalk, hair scraped back, Lineisy's taut curls were left as nature intended and she was universally lauded for it, sparking a global debate about why we don't see natural hair on the catwalk more often. The enormous wave of attention and support no doubt helped clinch her a slot in the AW15 Prada campaign, shot by Steven Meisel and, months later, magazine covers.

Such was the impact of Lineisy's arrival on the catwalk this year that her UK agent Amanda Bretherton, President of Next London, tells me she is devising 'a global strategy to amplify the unbelievable SS16 show season, translating that into advertising and editorials that will elevate and position her at the very highest level.'

Carole White, founder of Premier Model Management, who helped launch Naomi Campbell and Malaika Firth, predicts Lineisy will crack the modelling world's shortlist of top earners, booking the kinds of big campaigns that turn models into household names.

'The shows dictate everything now,' says Carole. 'The first question from the casting directors [for the campaigns] is, "Which shows has she done?"'

You can actually see Lineisy's profile growing in real time on Instagram (21.9k and rising). There she is on cult magazine covers and in editorials (she singles out Katy England and Karl Templer as stylists she has enjoyed working with). There are selfies with everyone from Cara Delevingne to Diane von Fürstenberg, Stella McCartney to Pat McGrath, captioned in perfect English, which suggests some help from management.

In two short seasons, Lineisy has achieved a kind of success that is a big deal for any model, of any background or ethnicity. The fact that she's the first in history to turn natural Afro hair into a global topic makes her rise to fame feel even more historic. To be clear, black models have worn their hair natural on the catwalk before (Bethann Hardison in the Seventies, Alek Wek in the Nineties and Rose Cordero in the Noughties, to name a few). And Lineisy is hardly the only one doing it at the moment: both Ajak Deng and Karly Loyce wear Afros. But there was something about the sight of Lineisy at Prada – her hair throwing the sleek straightness of the other models' hair into sharp relief – that made the idea a real discussion, and put the fashion world in line with the zeitgeist.

In the wider realm, this month's cover star, Lupita Nyong'o, and Solange Knowles are unofficial ambassadors for the natural hair movement, which began in the 1960s when African-American activists wore their curls as a symbol of pride in the wake of the Civil Rights Movement, and has evolved to have a different kind of revival of late. Who can forget actress and activist Viola Davis's emotionally charged speech to pick up her Best Actress In A Drama Series Emmy award, the first ever to be won by a black actor? She left her hair styled, but natural, as she told the world with tears in her eyes: 'The only thing that separates women of colour from anyone else is opportunity.'

'Lineisy Montero is a supermodel in the making. Her look is unique. Her hair is proof that what is beautiful is what is natural' – CARINE ROITFELD

'It's not often I see a woman so special. She can make anything look desirable' – ANGUS MUNRO

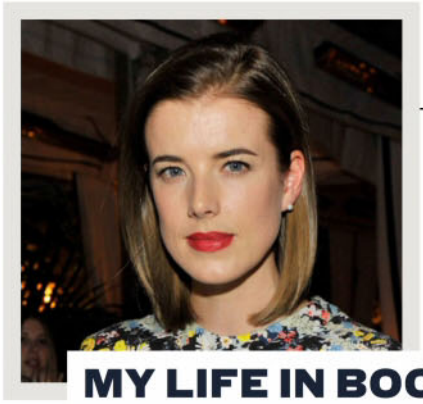
Lineisy has been quietly making her own assessment of the state of diversity in the fashion industry, and notes that it goes beyond hair type or skin colour. 'You are starting to see more girls with natural hair. There is more acceptance than before, but not as much as there should be.' Though much has been made of it, she questions whether her hair actually has any real significance. 'The only thing I would change would be for all models to have the same opportunities. Black, white, Asian – everyone. And to always be natural and keep it real. The industry is not like this at the moment.'

Angus believes she won't have to wait very long. 'Thankfully, we are gradually becoming more responsible as an industry towards the inclusion of all of the world's races and cultures. Lineisy is a product of this slow but sure progress.'

Having looked through all 68 SS16 shows in which Lineisy walked, it is true that the stylists have largely left her hair alone. But the Balmain show in Paris stands out because she sported a pin-straight ponytail. 'I wore that hairstyle because all of us were wearing the same thing. The only product they put in my hair was a bit of Vaseline and I could wash that out,' she says. She only has one stipulation when it comes to sitting in the make-up chair. 'The first thing I, [with the support of] my agency, say is, "Don't use any chemicals on my hair."'

Straight after the shows, Lineisy posts a picture of an airport trolley, laden with designer luggage, captioned, 'Next stop home' – a tidy metaphor for a woman who has both world domination and her mum's rice pudding firmly in her sights.

SEE IT Watch Lineisy in action on the runway at elluk.com/catwalk



@AGGYDEYN

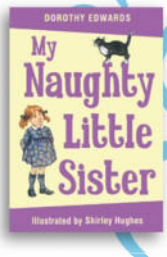
MY LIFE IN BOOKS

AGYNESS DEYN

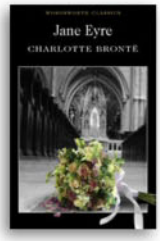
The model and Sunset Song actress, 32, shares the books that have shaped her life

My Naughty Little Sister by Dorothy Edwards

I loved my mum reading to me when I was little. I was probably the naughty little sister, like the girl in this children's classic, to my brother until our sister was born when I was four. She became the mischievous one when we were kids; I was quiet and a bit of a daydreamer.



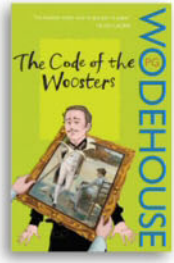
Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë



Jane is the oldest punk there is. Her rebelliousness and independence really inspired me in my late teens. It was my first real dose of feminism, even though I didn't really know what that was then. Whenever something went wrong, my friend and I would ask, 'What would Jane Eyre do?'

The Code Of The Woosters by P.G. Wodehouse

I love P.G. Wodehouse books because they're so eccentrically English. I've lived in the US for 10 years, but the UK still feels like home. I really miss that particular sense of humour, so this book is great as it makes me laugh out loud at the absurdity of all the 'You rang, M'Lord' silliness.



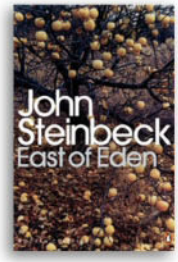
Memories, Dreams, Reflections by C.G. Jung



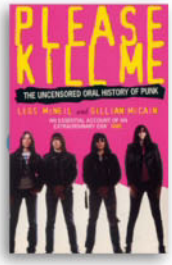
I became obsessed with Carl Jung in my early 20s. My friend Louis gave me this book and it changed how I looked at life. It's about Jung's inner life and it inspired me to become more introspective. I had come from a working-class background and was propelled into the modelling world, where I was mixing with different people, so I wanted to discover who I was in relation to it all.

East Of Eden by John Steinbeck

I've been trying to read the classics more recently and the twists in this book literally had me throwing it at the sofa. It was recommended by a friend, so I was constantly on the phone talking to him about it. The story chronicles two families in California in the early 20th century. Each of the characters embodies a different human trait and it's fascinating to see how their lives intertwine.



Please Kill Me: The Uncensored Oral History Of Punk by Legs McNeil and Gillian McCain

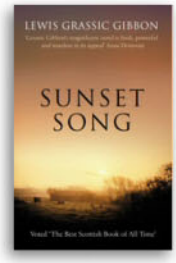


I read this book (about the punk scene in New York) when I was 15 and it instilled in me a dream to leave Manchester and explore the world. As a teenager I listened to The Clash and The Ramones, and was quite rebellious with my clothes and hair. Punk is an attitude that helped shape my identity. It's about being self-assured even if you're the oddball.

Sunset Song by Lewis Grassic Gibbon

I just played the heroine Chris Guthrie in the film adaptation of this novel. When I first read the book, I cried my eyes out. It's about a girl growing up in a farming family in Scotland at the start of the 20th century and the crazy events that shape her into a young woman. It's uplifting because it helps you understand that whatever happens in your life, you can get through it.

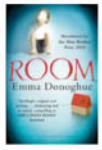
Sunset Song is in cinemas 4 December



PIN IT Have a look at our Pinterest board, at ellemag/ellebookclub

AND... READ THREE BOOKS BEHIND THIS YEAR'S HOTTEST OSCAR CONTENDERS

1 **ROOM BY EMMA DONOGHUE**
In this harrowing novel, a mother and son struggle to survive in captivity. Brie Larson gives a powerhouse performance as Ma in the screen adaptation.



2 **JOY BY FERGUS MASON**
The biography of Miracle Mop inventor Joy Mangano maps her transition from single mother to household name. Jennifer Lawrence (right) brings her to life.



3 **THE DANISH GIRL BY DAVID EBERSHOFF**
A fictional account of the life of Lili Elbe, one of the first people to have sexual readjustment surgery. On screen, Eddie Redmayne plays Lili.



ELLE BOOK CLUB

For more #ELLEBookClub reads, head to elleuk.com/bookclub

Words: Tamsin Crimmens, Radhika Seth. Photography: Alamy, Getty, Rex.



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ANNA TREVELYAN

The stylist, fashion director and Haus Of Gaga acolyte shows ELLE around her walk-in wardrobe of a New York apartment

Words **Lauren Waterman** Photography **Aaron Stern**

@ANNATREVELYAN



The ultimate individualist: Anna wears an Astrid Andersen kimono

One of the most commonly used adjectives in Anna Trevelyan's vocabulary is 'rare'. As in: 'This is a really rare, old Issey Miyake piece – I found it in Paris at a vintage shop that doesn't exist any more,' or, regarding her toy collection: 'I like rare things.' Whenever possible, she's more specific. Of a particular Pepto-Bismol-pink coat, an ultimately unproduced sample that was given to her by designer Craig Green, she enthuses: 'There's only one of these in the whole world.'

Anna, 30, is showing me around her Brooklyn apartment. It's no surprise that she is attracted to the unusual and unique: a stylist who moonlights as the fashion director for the directional London boutique Machine-A, she spent four formative years working under Nicola Formichetti, during which time she worked closely with the Haus Of Gaga, back when the self-proclaimed Lady was regularly blowing minds with her out-there (and, more often than not,





CASADEI BOOTS

'I love them, even though they're quite difficult to walk in.'

TOY COLLECTION

'When I was a kid, I collected fluffy toys. Now I'm into robots and cartoons.'



Anna's top NYC hangouts: 1. Miss Favela (missfavela.com) 'I love the vibe of this Brazilian restaurant.' 2. Toy Tokyo (toytokyo.com) 'They have all of these



MANICURE

'My nail artist, Naomi Yasuda, is amazing. She does Madonna and J.Lo's nails, and she's the best in the world.'



one-off) ensembles. 'It was an amazing experience,' Anna says. 'It was a lot of work and a lot of creativity, making things happen in, like, no time, all across the world. I learnt so much from both Lady Gaga and Nicola. They're lovely, inspiring people, and I don't think I would be where I am without them.'

But the long-time London resident – now a newish New Yorker, having moved last December to a glass-walled one bedroom flat on the southern edge of Williamsburg – is equally influenced, she thinks, by an adolescence spent in Lichfield and Milton Keynes. 'At the time, I thought the culture there was so dull,' she admits. 'Like, when I was growing up, it was that kind of streetwear aesthetic – sportswear, tracksuits. I couldn't find anything interesting about it, and then, as I do my work, I discover that feeling is quite a big part of it.'

Her own look tends to be rather adventurous, beginning with her nearly waist-length fuchsia-and-marigold-hued hair, mostly extensions, she admits: 'I used to wear a different-coloured wig every day, but it gets kind of annoying after a while. This is much better because I can put it in a ponytail.' Meanwhile, her closet is, in fact, the bedroom: she's pulled her bed out into the main living space to create a studio apartment with an enormous, windowed walk-in wardrobe. It contains four metal racks and at least seven large, clear plastic bins filled with any number of traffic-stopping pieces, including a neon-yellow-striped Bernhard Willhelm dress, a gold animal mask from Fleet Ilya, and a pair of blatantly fake 'Louis Vuitton' monogram-covered track pants.

'I love really iconic, dramatic things that probably no one else would wear,' she explains. But while that does describe a not-insignificant portion of her wardrobe, there's also no shortage of wearable items (such as a crystal-covered Ashish sweatshirt and a pretty, almost princess-y blue and white gown by Chinese designer Xiao Li) that plenty of women would be happy to call their own. 'I like colourful things, graphic things, pop things, sexy clothes,' she says. 'Sportswear, streetwear, menswear.' The result is a manner of dressing that's consistent mostly in its ability to surprise; she describes her style, when pressed, as 'extroverted'.

'I'll wear anything,' she concludes, 'that makes me feel good.'



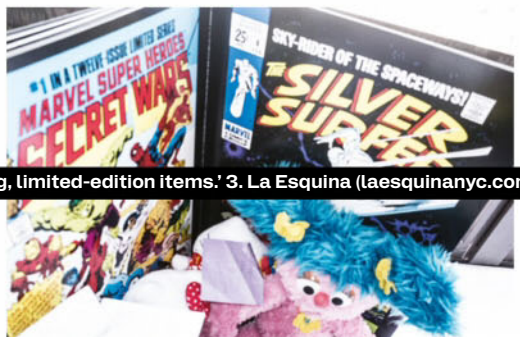




SECOND-HAND BOOKS

'I use them for inspiration. My favourite is *The Virgin Sperm Dancer*, about a boy who wakes up a girl and goes and has all of these sexual adventures.'

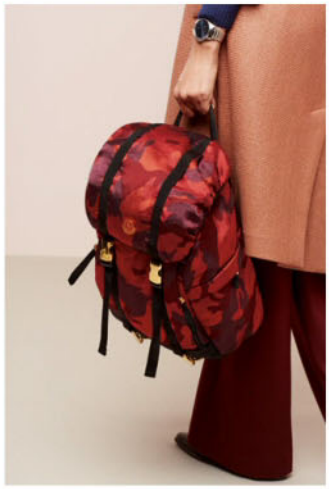




Make-up: Julianna Grogan at Bryan Bantry Agency.

amazing, limited-edition items.' 3. La Esquina (laesquinanyc.com) 'Go for the *elotes* (corn on the cob).' 4. Webster Hall (websterhall.com) 'I go on Thursday nights.'





Left: Cotton coat, £499, Paul Smith. Cashmere jumper (just seen), £49.95, Massimo Dutti. Cotton trousers, £225, Atea Oceanie. Patent-leather shoes (worn throughout), £95, Uterqüe. Steel watch, £660, Gucci. Silk and cotton backpack, £530, Moncler **Far left:** Wool coat, £255, Comptoir des Cotonniers. Nylon dress, £65, Finery. Metal earrings, £7.50, Diva at Miss Selfridge. Leather and steel watch, £1,700, Tag Heuer Carrera **Below:** Wool-mix jacket, £905, and matching trousers, £520, both Escada. Cotton shirt, £630, Marni. Lurex socks, £4, River Island



Add interest by layering your watch above your sleeve

House red

'Brouge' ***(burgundy-rouge)*** is the one colour to add to your wardrobe this winter

Right: Wool coat, £99.95, Gap. Polyester-mix vest, £140, Self-Portrait. Cashmere jumper (worn underneath), £49.95, Massimo Dutti. Wool trousers, £345, House Of Holland
Far right: Wool coat, and nylon dress, both as above. Jacquard boots, £870, Dior. Suede bag, £595, Burberry Prorsum



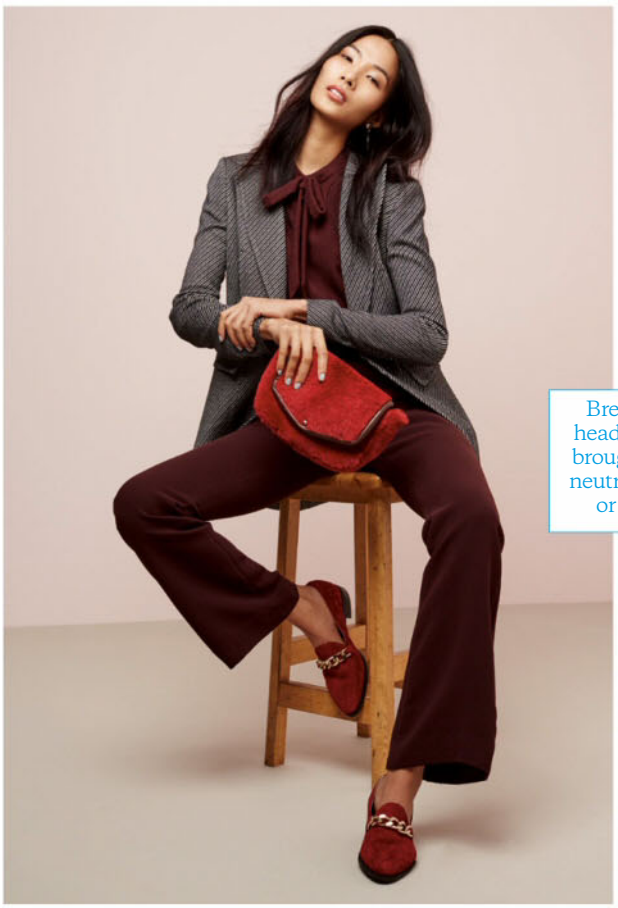




Right: Leather jacket, £270, 2nd Day. Polyester sleeveless coat, £485, By Malene Birger. Cotton-mix shirt, £38, Atterley. Satin trousers, £59, Finery. Leather shoes, £115, Cos **Far right:** Polyamide jumper, £22.99, New Look. Suede handbag, £495, Kate Spade. Stainless-steel and leather watch, £2,070, Chaumet. Sterling-silver ring, £55, Pandora **Below:** Wool-blend tweed jacket, £530, Hugo Boss. Wool top, £325, Mother Of Pearl. Polyester trousers, £195, Whistles. Suede shoes, £185, Russell & Bromley. Metal earrings, £7.50, and shearling bag, £35, both Topshop



#ELLEFASHIONCUPBOARD



Break up head-to-toe brouge with neutral navy or grey





Left: Cotton-mix shirt, as before. Acetate glasses, £209, Céline **Right:** Wool coat, £359, Paul Smith, Wool shirt, £480, Marco De Vincenzo. Cotton trousers, and metal earrings, both as before

Styling: Donna Wallace. Photography: Cameron McNee. Additional photography: Imaxtree. Hair and make-up: Martina Lattanzi at One Represents using Tom Ford Beauty and Aveda. Manicure: Roxanne Campbell using Nails Inc. Model: Thuy Hoang at PRM Agency. For shopping details, see Address Book.



STYLE IT
See what Team ELLE wear to work at elleuk.com/street-style

GIFT IT NOW

Gold stars

Gifting comes with an extra-luxe twist this Christmas. Introducing the limited edition ***Arctic Gold*** styling range from ***GHD***

Styling **Alex Kristal** Photography **Sam Hofman**





Clockwise, from left: GHD Arctic Gold Platinum Styler Gift Set, £165. GHD Arctic Gold Air Hairdryer and V Gold Classic Styler (sold as Deluxe Dry & Style Gift Set), £195. GHD Arctic Gold Curve Soft Curl Tong Gift Set, £120

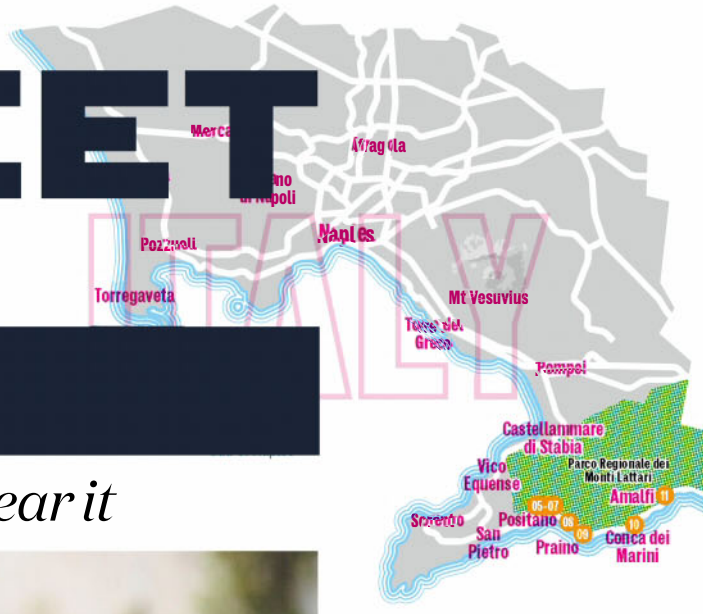
Ever feel like Christmas is one big exercise in building your re-gifting pile for the year ahead? Not this one. For 2015, those clever folk at GHD have created the limited edition Arctic Gold collection – all beautifully presented in gift boxes with coordinating roll bags and heat mats for that extra bit of luxe. So what will it be? The Curve Classic Curl Tong, one of the stylers or an Air Hairdryer? Or maybe your heart is set on the multi-functional wonder that is GHD's new and much lauded Platinum Styler, which lets you style quickly and kindly in multiple ways. With their brushed-gold finishes, these beauties don't just look good – every one comes with GHD's legendary performance for brilliant heat styling every time. To be sure you get the style you want, these handy stickers will help you drop that hint. Merry Christmas!

SHOP IT Ready to drop that hint? Find the range at leading salons, stores and **ghdhair.com** and let them know with **#hintghd**


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See it › buy it › wear it









p106



AMALFI, ITALY

ELLE STYLES

CANDELA NOVEMBRE, 35, EXECUTIVE EDITOR AT LAMPOON

SHOP MY LOOK

Suede jacket, £369, **Sandro.** *Acrylic dress, £38,* **Asos.** *Faux-leather shoes, £29.99,* **Zara.** *Acetate sunglasses, £310,* **Dior.** *Leather bag, £145,* **L.K.Bennett** ›



@CANDELANOVEMBRE

Street Style... **Amalfi, Italy** Be inspired by bold colour and versatility on Italy's south-west coast

Micro Trend... **Oversized coats** All the better for wrapping up your winter wardrobe

Styling: Harriet Stewart. Main photography: Victoria Adamson. Additional photography: Georgia Devy Smith at Anthea Simms, Anthea Simms. Map: Russell Bell.



ELLE STYLES LUCY WILLIAMS, 28, FASHIONMENOW.CO.UK



'I don't wear much colour, but I love layering different textures. The combination makes a neutral palette more interesting'

@LUCYWILLIAMS02

SHOP MY LOOK
Suede jacket, £350, Whistles. *Acetate sunglasses, £230,* Gucci. HunzaG *top,* Asos *skirt,* Céline *sandals,* Chloé *bag, and jewellery, all Lucy's own*



ELLE STYLES ELEONORA CARISI, 30, JOUJOUVILLEROY.COM

'As an alternative, I would unbutton this dress and wear it as a coat with jeans to give it a dressed-down feel'





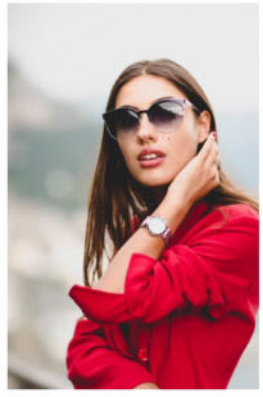
SHOP MY LOOK
Embroidered cotton dress, £95, Asos. *Acetate sunglasses, £130,* MaxMara. Jimmy Choo *shoes, and* Dsquared2 *bag, both Eleonora's own*

@ELEONORACARISI





ELLE STYLES PATRICIA MANFIELD, 23, THEATELIER.ME



SHOP MY LOOK
Acetate sunglasses, £230, Tommy Hilfiger. MaxMara *trouser suit,* Omega *watch,* Louis Vuitton *bag, and jewellery, all Patricia's own*



'A well-cut suit always makes me feel sexy. I would also wear the jacket as a dress'

@PATRICIAMANFIELD

ELLE STYLES LINDA TOL, 31, LINDATOL.COM



@LINDATOL_

'I always add boyish elements to something more feminine, so I'd throw on a bomber to complete the look'



SHOP MY LOOK
Silk dress, £120, Warehouse. *Acetate sunglasses, £110,* Carrera. Santoni *shoes, and* Jimmy Choo *bag, both Linda's own* ›

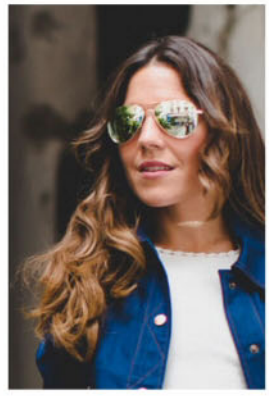


Photography: Victoria Adamson.



ELLE STYLES PAULA ORDOVAS, 29, MYPEEPTOES.COM

SHOP MY LOOK
Denim jacket, £370, and matching shorts, £245, both Rag & Bone. *Canvas and rubber trainers, £50,* Superga. *Acetate sunglasses, £55,* Polaroid. Zara *top,* Chloé *bag, and jewellery, all Paula's own*





@MYPEEPTOES

'To dress up this double-denim for evening, I'll be adding heels and a red lip'

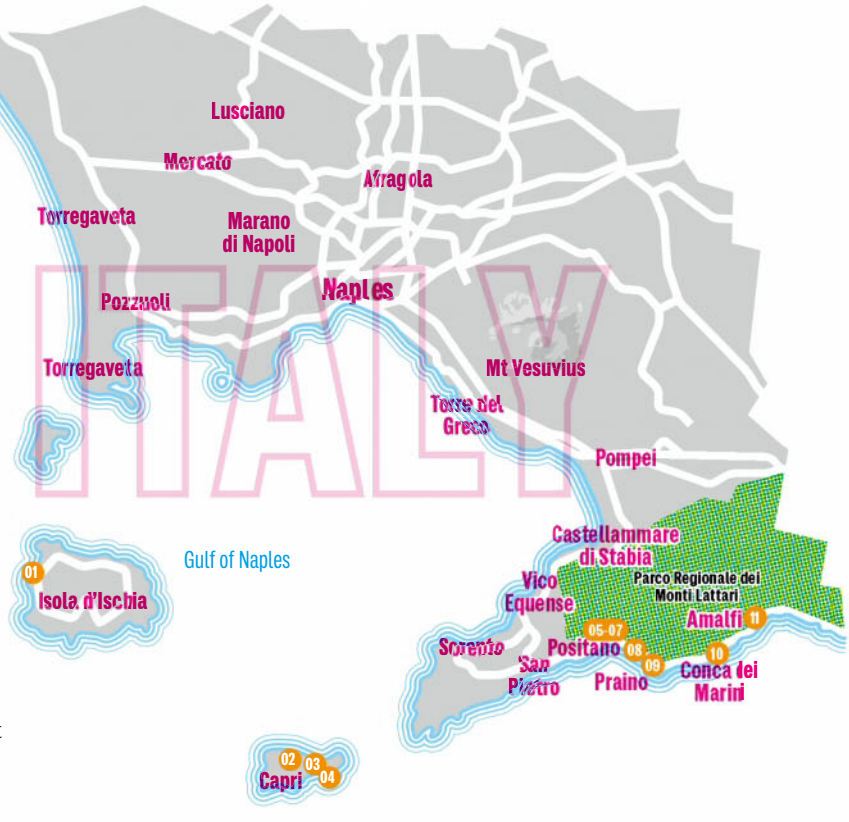
MAP IT • DO IT
See full Amalfi listings at elleuk.com/travel

LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL

Rugged coastline, beautiful beaches, amazing food... it's little wonder the Amalfi coast attracts Europe's most stylish

INSIDER'S GUIDE TO ALMALFI, ITALY

Meet... for seafood dishes and *that* view at **Da Adolfo** 3 (daadolfo.com) *Shop...* unmistakably Italian loungewear at **La Bottega Di Brunella** 5 (abbigliamentopositanobrunella.com) *Eat...* a grab-and-go selection of olives, artichokes, breads and meats from **Delicatessen Positano** 6 *Spend...* all day at nearby Capri's perfectly picturesque **La Fontelina Beach Club** 4 (fontelina-capri.com) *Stay...* at the charming family-run **Le Sirenuse** 7 (sirenuse.it)



Styling: Harriet Stewart. Photography: Victoria Adamson. Map: Russell Bell. For shopping details, see Address Book.

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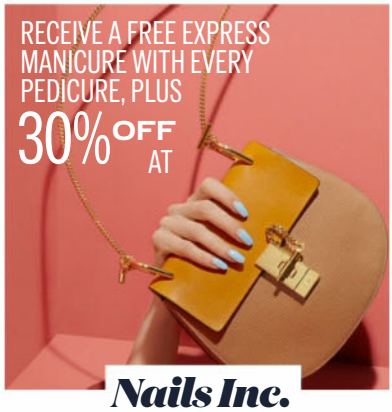
Cartizze Bar, Mayfair



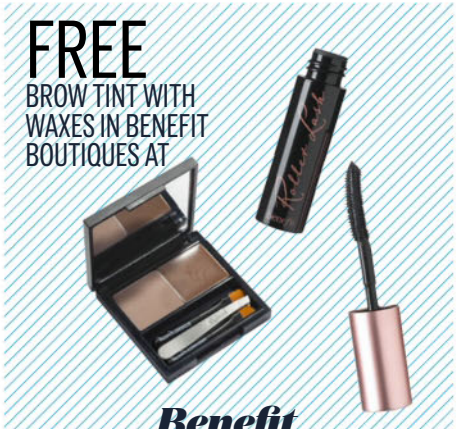
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Nails Inc.



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Photography: 3 Objectives, Jamie Bevan, AC Cooper, Anthea Simms, Aaron Tilley.

Go big or go home

Maximise your style with an oversized coat





Wool-mix coat, £450, Claudie Pierlot







ELLE tip: If in doubt, go classic. A long-line navy coat will serve you for years to come. *Wool coat, £140, Warehouse*



ELLE tip: A mannish coat is a foolproof way to try out the oversized trend.













ELLE tip: Upgrade your leather jacket with a longer-line shearling aviator. *Leather-mix jacket, £1,300, J Brand*



ELLE tip: It's all about layering – wrap yourself in a giant scarf or chunky polo neck for serious snuggle appeal.





Compiled by: Billie Bhatia. Photography: 3 Objectives, Victoria Adamson, Georgia Devey Smith at Anthea Simms. For shopping details, see Address Book.

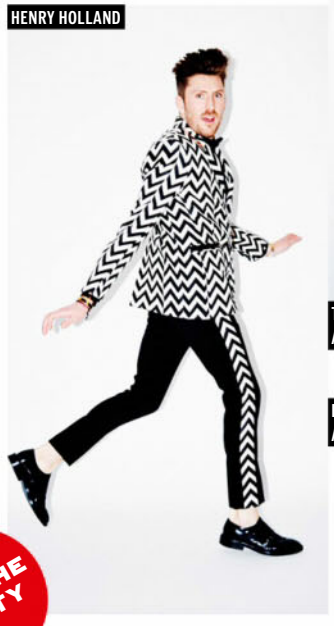
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Put the fashion world's biggest designers and top models in a room with pop royalty and A-list film stars, and sparks will fly. Trust us. You won't want to miss a minute of the 19th annual ELLE Style Awards this February. We'll be giving you live online access to the party, bringing you the awards, the outfits and all the insider gossip as it happens. Join the year's biggest fashion party at @elleuk and bookmark elleuk.com for updates. If last year's Taylor Swift-Sam Smith shenanigans are anything to go by, it's set to be one hell of a bash.



JENNIFER SAUNDERS AND REBEL WILSON



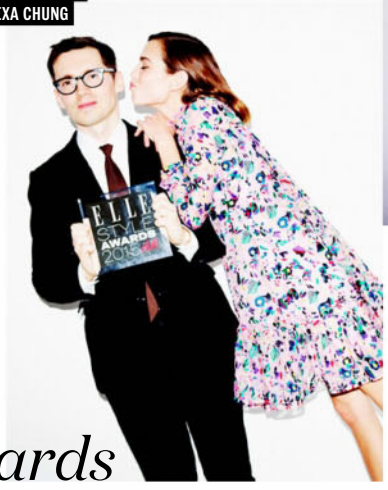
HENRY HOLLAND



TAYLOR SWIFT AND SAM SMITH



NICK GRIMSHAW



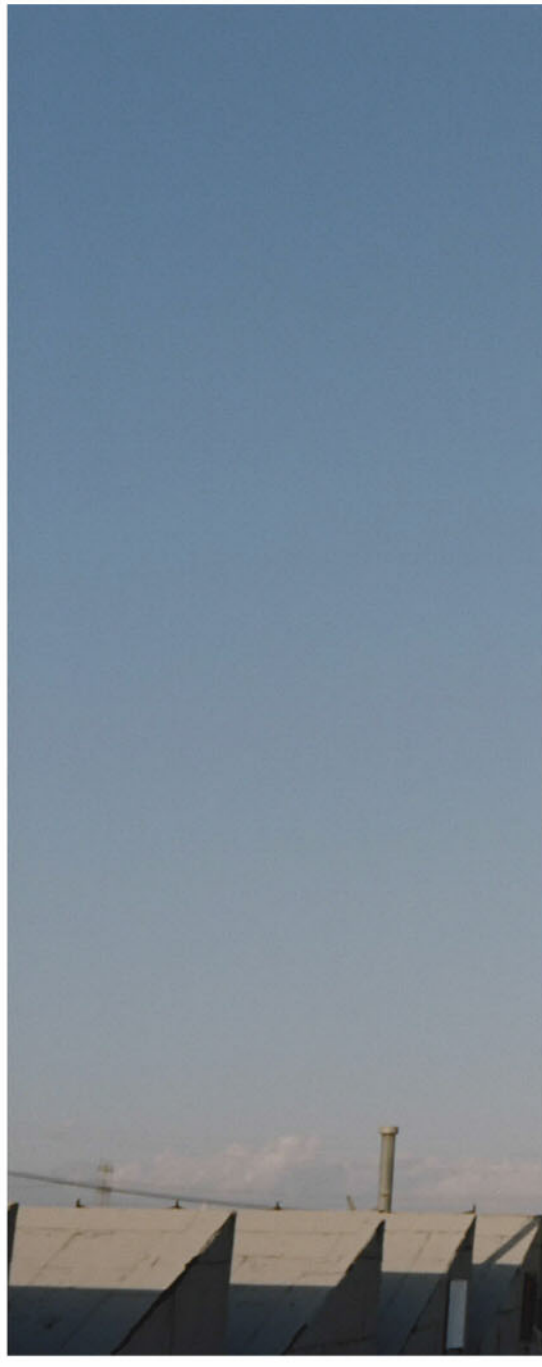
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Photography: Bella Howard.



sex *is my* sat nav

Mapping her city through a series of first dates, hook-ups and heartbreak led ***Cat Somers*** *on a journey of self-discovery*



Photography: Jason Lee Parry.

The first time it happened was six months ago. I was in Clapham, on my way to a job interview, when I felt a glimmer of familiarity. As I approached a bus stop, I sensed that I had been there before. The street was a little busier than the previous time, but I recognised it.

That's because I *had* been there, early on a bright Sunday morning, in fact. I was wondering where the closest Underground station was, my face covered in that smug smirk you get when you're heading home from a one-night stand, that march of the morning after. I walked into my interview with a confident smile, knowing what I had once got up to just a few hundred yards away from the office. I got the job. And little did I know, I would receive a flash from the past like this one again, and again.

My relationship with London has blossomed into a love story, which is more than I can say for past personal liaisons. In the six years I've lived here, I've grown to love this city and call it my home. I've also waited for a *lot* of texts after one-night flings and, through dating, discovered London in a way I never thought I would.

I moved here in 2009, straight from university in Bath. The size of London intimidated me – everyone looked like they had a sense of purpose and knew what they wanted. Now I understand that most people are probably faking it, but the 22-year-old me was overwhelmed. To add to the bewildered feelings, four months after I moved to London I broke up with my boyfriend of two years. It was inevitable for us, so a few months later, I was ready to experience more of what the city had to offer.

It was pre-Tinder, so location-based dating was reliant on physically being in the same place as another person, rather than meeting via an app. What a novelty! My first one-night stand started in the same way many evenings like it would: half-price white wine at after-work drinks with my colleagues. The events of the night are hazy. Memories come in waves, ›



with lots of holes. The man was tall, with ginger hair, but I'm not certain of his name, nor what his job was. He lived in Battersea, but I have no idea how we travelled to his house after talking in the bar for a couple of hours. I do remember having tea and toast with one of his housemates before retreating to his bedroom.

The next morning, he took me for breakfast, before walking me to a bus stop. A sweet gesture, until I realised the bus I was on was taking me to Brixton rather than home to central London... Oh. I had a choice: head back to Battersea and make my journey longer, or continue on the bus to get the Underground. The latter won, mainly because my increasingly hungover state meant that I wanted to get home as quickly as possible. At least I could say I'd been to Brixton then, even if only for a minute.

'I looked up and realised there were now four people in the bar that I'd slept with. I'm pretty sure that's a rare occurrence'

In the days that followed, I waited for the ginger guy to text. Naively, because he'd taken me for breakfast, I thought he'd get in touch. With hindsight, it was probably the token payoff to ease his guilt for not intending to call. Or he just really wanted a fry-up and I wasn't leaving quickly enough. Either way, I didn't hear from him.

Subsequent hook-ups were interspersed with short-term flings, from a person at work to my flatmate's friend. Coincidentally, both of them moved to Spain, which left me single and ready to explore more of London.

One friend's house parties in Islington proved fruitful; the bashes were legendary, and always well-attended. The first one I went to had a Christmas-song theme. I was *Santa Baby* (polka-dot fleece onesie and toy dummy), he was *The Fairy On The Christmas Tree*. I think the picture of our brief courtship paints itself. My journey home from his place in Manor House would have been a lot more comfortable if I'd had the foresight to take a change of clothes, but at least I was wearing fleece, which is entirely suitable attire for a winter's day, right?

Out of all of my sexual encounters, I only have unpleasant memories of one. He was arrogant and obstinate, bragging about how much money he made as a trader in the city, and I'm not entirely sure how we ended up in a cab to his flat in West London. In the morning, he woke me up before 8am (a ludicrous time for a weekend) and told me I either had to have sex with him or leave. I was out of the door and looking for a bus in under four minutes. What a creep. The experience made me feel a bit cheap, so I took a hiatus from hook-ups and told my friends I was on a self-imposed sex ban for six months.

After five, I got impatient and joined the dating site mysinglefriend.com. I had a few fun hook-ups, ranging from drinks in Angel and Embankment, to the cinema in Shoreditch and a very expensive dinner in Farringdon. I found that learning my way around London without going home with anyone was refreshing, but by gosh, it tested my willpower. My exploration of London – through the people in it – took another hiatus at the end of 2012, when I met a guy at a wedding outside of the city. Despite him working away for long periods of time, we decided to make a go of it. I retained my independence by being in a long-distance relationship, which meant I spent more time with friends, and found new places with them.

When we broke up after a year, my career as a journalist was progressing and kept me too busy to have wild nights out on a regular basis. By this time, I'd been living in London for almost five years, and travelling home from various locations on weekend mornings felt like wasted time. There were occasions when I invited people back to mine, but ultimately I wanted to spend time with friends; I didn't want to abandon them on a night out to speak to someone whose name I probably wouldn't remember in the morning.

Perhaps the most surreal experience I've had happened recently in Angel. I was on a date and, after dinner, we decided to go for a drink or two before our night ended. She chose the place and went to the bar while I popped to the loo. As I came out, I walked past a table of people. Entirely coincidentally, it contained my flatmate and nine of my friends, two of whom I'd hooked up with (separately!). It was awkward, but I styled it out, and invited my date to meet them. (Possibly not my smoothest move, but I panicked, OK?) It turned into a fun night, until later in the evening, when my flatmate and I went to buy a round, and things got weirder. As we waited, we discussed how bizarre my situation was. Then, I looked up and realised that, including my date, there were now *four* people in the room who I'd slept with: the guy serving behind the bar had been a university hook-up. I don't know how to work out probability, but I'm pretty sure that's a rare occurrence.

If there's anything that my exploits around London have taught me, it's that London isn't as scary as I initially thought. Yes, it's big, but it's essentially a load of villages smooshed together. My friends are the ones who make this city what it is for me. I haven't received any explicit judgement from any; most are more excited to hear the salacious details of my latest escapade than to criticise my decisions. I've seen the physical disappointment on their faces when we're catching up and I tell them I don't have any stories for them, that there hasn't been anyone new since we last spoke.

Now, I can't say I won't ever explore a new part of London at the same time as discovering a person's bedroom for the first time, but friends are definitely my priority for now. That is, until my bank of stories starts getting tired.

she said **LISTEN** to a discussion about dating today at elleuk.com/podcasts

Photography: Jason Lee Parry.

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RYAN **DOESN'T**



LIVE HERE

In her controversial online column for ELLE, The New Girl, Rhyannon Styles chronicles her moving experience transitioning to a woman. Here, she reflects on the start of her journey

ANY MORE

No one knew what was wrong with me. I had been spending days on the sofa, blankly staring at the walls of my flat in Hackney with no desire to do anything – or even move at all, really. I had grown facial hair – a first. I was overeating. I was wearing my boyfriend's clothes, but had no self-esteem. This generally low feeling hung over every corner of my life. I wanted to die. And it was becoming obvious.

My boyfriend wisely suggested I try therapy. So, in a last-ditch effort to save myself, I agreed and began to see a LGBTQ psychotherapist on Thursday mornings.

It was late summer 2011. My name was Ryan. I was 29. I was born in 1982. And then born again in 2012 (I don't mean that in a spiritual way). I'll explain.

I grew up in a small rural community in Staffordshire – the type of place where everyone knows everyone. All of my friends were girls. My best friend, Laura, permed her hair like Lightning from *Gladiators*. I, on the other hand, liked to dress up as the Blue Fairy from *Pinocchio*. I built houses for my sisters' Sindy dolls and became an excellent roller skater.

What I didn't like doing was the 'boy' stuff: fishing, playing football and anything that involved getting dirty. I was the boy who would dab Vaseline on his eyelids and cheekbones to get just the right amount of shimmer, as Natalie Imbruglia had suggested in *Just Seventeen*.

My flamboyant behaviour came at a price. The boys in school began to call me Rachel. Once, during an afternoon of running errands with my nan I heard a voice yell, 'Oi, look! There's Rachel the poof.' I was mortified and deeply embarrassed that my nan had to witness it.

At school, my classmates would throw stones and potatoes at me. The taunting was constant, a twisted normality for me. Sometimes the abuse felt life threatening, like the time when I was 14 and a boy punched me in the face, sending me to A&E. When my teachers asked me about it, I lied to avoid attracting any more unwanted attention, by saying I had walked into a door. I think my parents suspected I was having problems, but they never asked. It was isolating, but little did I know, I was hardly alone: 70% of children who are confused about their gender identity are bullied at school, according to data released by the Home Office. Meanwhile, a study conducted by the American Williams Institute reveals that 78% of transgender respondents who had suffered physical abuse at school attempted suicide.

My life at school was awful, and my situation at home wasn't comforting. My parents divorced when I was six and it was deeply confusing because I didn't understand what was happening to my family. I thought my father didn't love me because he didn't love my mother. And I felt quite lost, having to move between my mum and my dad. This was made even more com-

plicated by the fact that I had to 'man up' to support my sister and mother, who had a nervous breakdown as a result of the split. I took on more responsibility and adopted more 'male' duties in the house, which confused me even further. Art, crafts and music were my escape from reality. They helped mask the displacement I was feeling.

The one thing I was clear on was this: I was attracted to men. And in the mid-Nineties, mainstream media was only just beginning to recognise gay men. This was pre-internet, pre-smart phones and pre-*Queer As Folk* [a ground-breaking late-Nineties TV show about the Manchester gay scene]. We were nine years away from a transsexual called Nadia winning *Big Brother*. You wouldn't be caught dead reading *Attitude* magazine in WHSmith. And so I couldn't find the information I desperately needed to understand who I was.

My life started to change for the better at 16, when I began to study art and design at the local college. I met other people who liked the same music as me. Some of my friends were even bisexual. I met boys who wore make-up and, in the afternoons, we'd all go to the local Wetherspoon and get drunk. I joined a band and played bass guitar. When we performed live, I'd wear make-up and dresses, which felt natural.

But still, I had never heard the words 'transsexual' or 'transgender' and many people in the world still haven't, though global celebrities such as Caitlyn Jenner and Laverne Cox certainly help. We don't have accurate data that reveals how many people in the UK, or even the US, identify as transgender. The UK Government Equalities Office has revealed that only 3,906 people have been granted Gender Recognition Certificates (GRCs) in the UK so far, and that this figure is most certainly an underestimate of the number of people who identify as transgender, considering many choose not to do so publicly. But I do think the numbers will increase, as general awareness grows. Already, the NHS referrals for children aged 10 and younger with gender identity confusion has quadrupled in the last six years.

Making these diverse friends at college gave me the courage to move to London at 18, eventually settling in Hackney, East London. It is where I found my tribe. I met men who were willing to stick two fingers up to gender binaries. They called themselves genderqueer or transdrogynous.

@RHYANNONSTYLES

They didn't care what anyone thought about how they looked or the way they dressed. This gave me licence to display my own femininity, to get to know the woman inside of me.

At first, I did it through clothing and make-up, performing in local clubs as the performance artist Ryan Styles. I'd wear dresses on stage, but menswear during the day. But I still felt unsettled: my euphoria at being in a new city, surrounded by kindred spirits, slowly gave way to depression again. It wasn't until I began therapy that I discovered the conflict over my identity was the root of my unhappiness, and that this was called gender dysphoria. This was more than just wanting to dress up as a woman; gender dysphoria is a condition where a person experiences distress because there is a mismatch between their biological sex and their gender identity.

'AT SCHOOL, MY CLASSMATES WOULD THROW STONES AND POTATOES AT ME. THE TAUNTING WAS CONSTANT, A TWISTED NORMALITY'

Doctors once considered it a psychiatric condition, but recent research suggests it may originate in the womb, possibly as a result of genetic or hormonal factors.

Ryan 'died' in 2012, one year after the UK government published the world's first transgender equality action plan.

When I wrote a letter to my parents explaining why I was transitioning, the news came as a shock. They had been very proud of Ryan. My dad didn't want me to do it. He thought it would make me unhappy in the long run. And even today, he still struggles to accept his new daughter. My mum, meanwhile, is slowly beginning to adjust to it, though she couldn't talk to me for two years (she thought that doing so and seeing the new me would make clear that her son was gone). It was tough, but I had resolved to transition, and to potentially have gender-reassignment surgery.

In order to do this through the NHS, I was referred by my local GP to the Gender Identity Clinic at Charing Cross Hospital. Over a period of 18 months, I had regular appointments with psychiatrists, who assessed my situation and feelings of gender dysphoria. I was prescribed oestrogen (Hormone Replacement Therapy) and was discharged this April having completed two years of 'Real Life Experience', a period of time in which transgender individuals live full-time in their preferred gender role.

I'm now waiting for an appointment to be assessed for surgery (usually, there is a 10-month wait). Once given the go-ahead, the operation takes place roughly six to nine months later. I'm expecting mine will happen in 2017, although the NHS is doing all it can to bring down the waiting times. But it's definitely not an overnight transformation.

My surgery would be a vaginoplasty, in which the penis is inverted to create a vaginal cavity and the skin from the scrotum makes the labia. The tip of the penis, where all the nerve endings are, is kept intact and used to make a clitoris, so you can still be sexually aroused. It takes around four to six hours to complete. Afterwards, you must dilate for the rest of your life, or have regular sex, to keep this cavity open. It's a life-changing operation, and it's irreversible.

To be considered for surgery, you have to prove you have been living full-time as a woman for a minimum of two years. I've heard that, back in the day, the NHS would randomly phone up people's employers and ask, 'Is so-and-so wearing a dress today?' But it's mad to think wearing a skirt makes you more of a woman. As much as I've come to love the act of exploring and displaying my femininity through clothes, my transition is about so much more.

Throughout all of the emotional, mental and physical preparations, I've been taking hormones, which feminise my appearance. My face is soft, my skin is supple, my hair is long. I don't see Ryan in the mirror.

It has been a long and, at times, heartbreaking process, yes. But this isn't a depressing story, it's an exciting and empowering one. For me, the choice was simple: live your life as a woman, or die as a man. And for the first time, living feels good.

she said **LISTEN** to Rhyannon talk more about her transition at elleuk.com/podcasts

Photography: Cameron McNee. Hair and make-up: Martina Lattanzi at One Represents using Tom Ford Beauty and Aveda. Manicure: Izabelle Bellamy.



MY CRAZY ASTRO love quest

Tamsin Crimmens gave up everything to go on an astrological journey; one that took her into the arms of men (and women), from beaches in India to mountains in Nepal, and all because she **followed her ELLE horoscope predictions to the letter**. So, does this mean star signs speak the truth after all? Whether they do or not, it was one hell of an adventure...

@TAMSINWRITES

It's New Year's Eve on Anjuna Beach in Goa, India. I'm surrounded by gorgeous hippies in dungarees and moonstones ushering in 2015 like a Baz Luhrmann movie on acid, as fireworks burst into a starry sky and trance music fills the warm, salty air. How did I get here? How is my life so different from this time last year, when I lay limp in the sheets of a man I was only half interested in, a hangover from a crappy night already creeping behind my eyes?

I blame the Saturn Sisters, ELLE's astrology oracles. Normally, I am interested in my horoscope (I'm a Leo) in the way most rational, intelligent people are. By that, I mean I'm mainly cynical unless something particularly fortuitous is predicted. But at the start of 2014, my interest was unusually piqued by a prediction in my ELLE online stars:

'2014 might be one of the best you've had in years, lovely Lioness. You can thank Jupiter, the most auspicious planet of all, for the gifts that are about to be bestowed.'

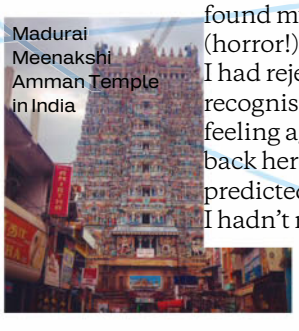
Cheering news, right? So I was a little miffed that by the time spring rolled around, everything still seemed to be going backwards. The year before, I'd moved to London, where I had been making a precarious living as a writer. When I was offered a lucrative freelance job marketing a huge digital event in my old stomping ground of Newcastle, I found myself crashing in my old flat and (horror!) in bed with my ex-boyfriend. I had rejected this life once before and recognised the familiar suffocating feeling again now. So what was I doing back here when the Saturn Sisters had predicted such great things? Apparently, I hadn't read the small print:

'The year begins with three rather exhausting retrogrades. February may bring exes out of the woodwork as Mercury goes retrograde in your relationship zone. April sees an important pivot point for your career when the Cardinal Grand Cross brings your attention to a professional matter of great importance.'

It was sounding scarily accurate. My bank account may have been in the black, but my boss was a nightmare – I wasn't happy. It seemed like these girls really had my cosmic card marked so, as soon as I could, I quit my job and headed back to London – but with my ex-boyfriend still very much in the picture. Of course, there was something else on the horizon:

'Jupiter, ruler of luck and abundance, is coming to your sign mid-year, and will remain through the middle of 2015. This transit only happens once every 12 years, so it's extremely special. Mark the 17th of July in gold glitter on your calendar.'

Then something strange happens... On 15 July, I meet a woman and it changes everything. When we are introduced through a mutual friend one night at a tiny Vietnamese restaurant in King's Cross, Jess's embrace is so warm it feels like getting a seat after standing on the Tube for 30 minutes. I love her laugh; the way she throws her head back and chuckles like Father Christmas. When I realise she's gay, my mind goes into overdrive, thrumming with unanswered questions: What about my boyfriend? Why don't I want to have sex with him? Shouldn't I get married, buy



Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple in India

READ IT
The Saturn Sisters reveal your forecasts at daily elleuk.com/horoscopes

a house and have babies? Am I a lesbian? Is this because of feminism? Is this Beyoncé's fault? I feel desperate to burst out of the boxes I have stuffed myself into.

Immediately, I am hooked on her and we begin an intense friendship. We spend dreamy days wandering from hipster cafe to park to pub. Jess gets a tattoo on her finger, so I get one on my wrist. Of Jupiter, obviously. I figure if she is the kind of gift the planet of growth offers and it only visits every 12 years, I'm going to grab this astrological opportunity by its halo. By my 28th birthday in August, I don't know whether the churning in my tummy is anxiety or excitement about where our friendship might possibly go. One night, Jess takes me to a gay bar, where I freak out and find words about my feelings for her tumbling from my mouth. It doesn't go down well, mainly because I still have a boyfriend. When I get home that evening, my flatmate announces she's moving out. I feel like my world is spinning. I turn to the Saturn Sisters:

'A lunar eclipse in your long-distance travel zone means a business trip can completely change your life in October – get packing.'

So I book a ticket to India. Maybe a tad impulsive, I'll admit. But with the pressure in my mind building, I need an escape route. In the space of a week, I quit both my boyfriend and flat. My friends are supportive, though a little confused: 'You're a lesbian, so you're going to India?' My family just want me home in time for Christmas.

I land in hot, humid Kerala, in south-west India, alone and wide-eyed with fear. My rickshaw driver speeds out of Cochin International Airport. 'What am I doing here?' I wonder, as a blur of cows and brightly coloured saris spin past. I retreat to Marari, a tiny beach village where I spend a month alone, writing furiously, attempting to answer the constant questions in my mind about identity, belonging and sexuality.

Jess proves hard to shake. I make an excellent attempt when I head to the backpacker haven of Varkala Beach, where I promptly fall hard: first for a pathologically deceptive Indian jeweller with a girlfriend (long story);





Misty mountains in Kodaikanal

then Anouk, a skinny, brown-eyed French girl I first notice as she sits alone at a clifftop cafe reading Chekhov. Obviously. Our connection is instantaneous.

Quelle surprise, she has a girlfriend who is travelling in another part of the country. During an overnight train journey, we sit with legs dangling over each other, hair blowing through the open window, covertly sharing a beer. I wake at dawn to the sound of morning prayer as the train pulls into Madurai. I look for Anouk on the platform, but she has disappeared into the night like a nymph. I write her a long love email asking her to join me in Kodaikanal's mountains, where mist rolls in and magic mushrooms grow. I lie on a grassy slope and imagine her face appearing in front of me. When I open my eyes, there she is. Perhaps I'm psychic now, too. We spend a week in rustic domesticity in our stone cottage. There is much intense staring into each other's eyes in front of the log fire that we struggle to light. Our affair is both epic and ridiculous, building to a climax that leaves me more confused than ever. She's French, what did I expect? Blowing kisses from the dirty window of a battered bus, she heads east to be with her girlfriend. Ouch.

All this falling down the rabbit hole has left me bruised and battered. I don't remember the Saturn Sisters mentioning the pain! Instead they say:

'Joy expands exponentially and riotous fun is high on your list. You'll crave the company of your most raucous mates, and will continue to meet new friends.'

Which is how I end up on that beach in Goa, leaving the seat on my flight back to London empty. I know by now that I've turned into an insufferable hippie cliche, so why not go the whole way? I get my nose pierced, dance under the light of the moon and sleep crammed into a camper van with seven others.

When I return to Kerala, there is a man. Sam is kind and gentle. He says the words I didn't know I needed to hear: 'You are a good person.' It releases some of the shame I have been carrying with me while flinging my heart at people incapable of handling it with care.

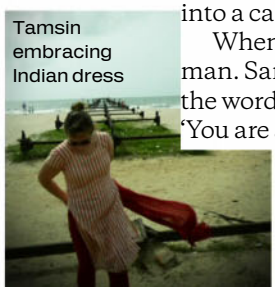
Turns out it doesn't matter whether I'm with a man or a woman, it's trust and respect (mainly for myself) that's been missing. My six-month visa is running out, as is my money. I'm not even surprised by the serendipity when an editor emails me with a commission at the last minute, buoying my bank balance. Perhaps the Saturn Sisters really are my guardian angels. I book the cheapest flight I find and spend a magical last day in India with Sam, who drives me to the airport and asks, 'Can we stay in touch?'

Two months later, it's 5.30am in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal. I sit huddled against the pre-dawn cold in a llama-wool blanket as the sun rises over the mountains. My mother has emailed urging me to come home. I call Sam (who I am shocked to find I do stay in touch with) and ask what he does when he feels lost. His words are so comforting that I rush back to be with him.

I am in the sky heading from Nepal to India, back to Sam, when the earthquake hits Nepal. Thousands die More are left without food or shelter as rain and fallen boulders make mountain roads unreachable. I am safe, though shaken by the near miss. Was it a lucky escape? Fate? By this point, I can't help feeling it was the Saturn Sisters and Jupiter protecting me.

Sam and I are still together and when you read this, I'll be back in India – not running away on a crazy astrological quest this time, but trying on commitment for size. If I've learnt anything from all this, it's that nothing is stable and the ground beneath your feet can shift anytime. Maybe it was all a crazy coincidence, or maybe the Saturn Sisters were driving my destiny for a year. Either way, I'm feeling happy and open to new experiences like never before. Namaste.

See p48 for your stars this month



Tamsin embracing Indian dress

LISTEN to Tamsin discuss her Astro Love Quest at elleuk.com/podcasts

Photography: Alamy, Tamsin Crimmens, Getty, Tamara Lichtenstein.



LIVING IN OBLIVION

For years, Sarah Hepola used alcohol as an easy way to be bolder, livelier and funnier. But then the drinking reached a dark place, literally, and she began to have blackouts. She pieces together the memories she lost

@SARAHHEPOLA

'I FELT LIKE MY BODY HAD BEEN HIJACKED BY AN EVIL TWIN. HOW WAS IT POSSIBLE TO DO SOMETHING AND HAVE NO MEMORY OF IT?'

I always prided myself on being a girl who drank. You know the kind: young, single, empowered. In 2005, I was (barely) making a living as a writer in New York. I was in my early 30s, knocking back martinis with my female friends at bars, where we complained about work and men. Sometimes we met for Sunday brunch, where we squinted through our hangovers and laughed about bad decisions, and every once in a while someone would say, 'I seriously have a drinking problem,' which always got a laugh. It was understood – it was a punchline.

I seriously did have a drinking problem, although it would take years to admit as much. For a long time, my drinking problem masqueraded as normal, big-city indulgence. We'd all woken up with a mouth like the Sahara and patchy spots in our memory. We'd all tapped out a nervous text the following morning: 'Did I do anything … weird?' But it happened to me more than most. There is no simple litmus test to identify a drinking problem – otherwise people like me wouldn't spend decades realising they have one – but the best place to start is to examine the evidence. To count the empties, if you will. My friends had a handful of those mornings. I had dozens.

To tell you how many drinks I was averaging a day is problematic for me. For one, I don't actually know the answer. Some nights I had three beers and went to bed. Others I drank until 4am and couldn't remember how much I drank (10 drinks? 14?). I was never a daily drinker. When you present a number, you're judged immediately: 'Oh, that's way more than I drink, so nothing she says applies to me.' Or: 'Oh, she wasn't drinking that much, what's her problem?' I drank more than most people, and more than I wanted to drink. How many drinks depended on the day, my mood, my body size that year, whether or not I was heartbroken that week, whether or not there was an open bar. It's just too hard to generalise when I'm summarising a 25-year-drinking career.

I do know my drinking started early. That's another red flag, although for decades, I considered it a bragging right. It began at home in Dallas, Texas, stealing sips of beer from my parents' stash when I was seven years old. I would take a few pulls from the can of Pearl Light and spin around the living room as the buzz trickled all the way down to my toes. My parents were moderate drinkers who never caught on to this ruse; indeed, they never even suspected. I was a straight-A student. A teacher's pet. One of the great myths of childhood is that there are Bad Girls and Good Girls, when most of us are carrying around the tool set for both.

You can imagine my thrill when my private indulgence gained social currency. By my teen years, drinking was cool, rebellious, sexy. I watched female friends actually train themselves to drink. They laboured to tolerate the sourness of beer and pushed themselves not to fall asleep after two cocktails, like winded runners trying to scale the wall at boot camp. Meanwhile, I knocked back Budweiser after Budweiser with an easy smile. (My Irish-Finnish heritage might have cursed me with stubby peasant thighs, but it also gave me an effortless constitution for booze.) I was so good at drinking, in fact, that I became a caretaker for those who weren't. Holding back someone's hair as they puked. Swapping out someone's third drink with a glass of water. The girls with real problems were rushed to the emergency room, dispatched to treatment centres. I felt bad for them, but I also thought: lightweights.

My consumption blossomed at university in Texas, where alcohol was our tribal ritual, but also my booster shot of courage. I always thought I'd make a strong student – arguing with men, challenging the professor – but I felt intimidated most of the time and rarely spoke in class. At night, though, warmed by the lapping fires of red wine and homemade margaritas made in our off-campus apartment, I could find my voice. Alcohol unlocked a bravado I had craved all my life: 'Screw them, we rule.' I had always longed to be one of those swaggering women, with their tart tongues and their lightning zaps of authority, but I was stuck in a people-pleaser's body. ('I don't know, where do *you* want to go to dinner?') Drinking gave me the lion's roar.

It also presented new problems. I woke up some mornings with pieces of the evening missing. How did we get home last night? Why is so-and-so mad at me? I had blackouts: episodes of alcohol-induced amnesia in which you keep talking and interacting with people while your long-term memory shuts down, and the next day you have no clue what you've said. I had a blackout the first time I got drunk, a few weeks shy of my 12th birthday, and the next morning, my older cousin informed me in a solemn voice about all my crazy antics. Running around without trousers. Sobbing on the stairs. I felt like my body had been hijacked by an evil twin: How was it possible to do something, and have no memory of it?

Not everyone can have a blackout (only about 50% of drinkers will, probably for genetic reasons), but they're common in binge-drinking environments, because they're caused by a spike in the blood-alcohol level. Drinking fast and drinking on an empty stomach are major risk factors for blackout. Being a woman is too, because we tend to be ›



smaller and our bodies metabolise alcohol slower. My blackouts became more frequent at university, where I had developed a taste for whiskey and tequila, and those blank-space mornings unmoored me each time. I woke up in a panic: 'What did I do? What did I say?' The older I got, however, the less panic they induced. Friends had the occasional blackout. Boyfriends had the occasional blackout. It was no big deal, right? My secret anguish became a new normal.

Normal. We all want to be assured that our drinking patterns fall on the spectrum of no-big-deal drinking, but 'normal' is not a fixed point. It all depends on where and with whom you are drinking. My 20s coincided with the rise of the liberated single woman; the Carrie Bradshaw years. It was normal to have 10 drinks in a night. I spent my 30th birthday eating sushi and drinking so much champagne, I vomited it all by midnight. This, it turns out, was a great metaphor for the next five years.

At 31, I moved from Texas to New York, where the bars stayed open till 4am, and cabs ferried me back home safely as I slumped in the back seat, and stores sold beer all night. The dream, right? Except it was a slow slide off the 'normal' spectrum and into the 'drinking problem' red zone. More evidence was accumulating: I often woke up in my Brooklyn apartment with no clue how I'd gotten home. I went to Paris on a magazine assignment and, after a night dipped in cognac, I fell into a blackout and re-emerged in the middle of having sex with a man I couldn't even remember meeting. It was one of the most confounding moments of my life. About a year later, I was forced to move out of my apartment following an incident in which I drunkenly passed out while boiling a pot of water, and the landlord's son almost had to break down my door with a fire extinguisher.

I knew I had a problem. Same as anyone who has a string of marital infidelities, four maxed-out credit cards, or a stash of heroin in their closet knows they have a problem. I believed I could manage it, though. Drinking was the centrepiece of my social life, the only path to sex and romance I knew. Can you imagine a blind date without alcohol? Can you imagine a Friday night? I'd be doomed.

I developed a habit of buying a six-pack on my way home from happy hour with the girls. I just needed more. (Red flag: the constant need for more.) Drinking at home assured I would stay out of trouble (red flag), although I shook up my purchasing pattern, so no store owner ever knew how frequently I bought booze (red flag). I must have screwed up, though, because one day I was handing the cashier some cash when he met my gaze, and the look in his warm brown eyes cut me. Was it judgement? Pity? Sympathy? Sorrow? I still don't know, but I could tell from his gaze that he saw me at that moment, in exactly the way I did not want to be seen. I never went back into his store. Screw that guy. I'd buy my beer somewhere else.

Everyone wants one piece of evidence to hold up in court so a complicated decision becomes utterly clear: I must quit drinking. Instead, I experienced an ever-escalating series of scrapes and near misses, humiliations and moral compromises. The epiphany was not a lightning flash so much as a dimmer switch. Friends confronted me gently. Credit card companies confronted me with no gentleness whatsoever. Although booze had long been a creative elixir, the magic stopped working. I couldn't write any more. Between hangovers, benders and the shame in between, my work was suffering. My body was too. I'd been neglecting it for years, pelting it with booze at night and carbs the next morning. I had a stomach ulcer, and a rash on my legs and arms. I was three-and-a-half-stone overweight.

I quit drinking at 35. I did not 'just stop'. Rather, I 'just stopped' about 100 times. The last of my drinking years are a portrait of me on the ropes: maybe if I only drink on weekends; maybe if I only drink wine and beer; maybe if I get a new apartment, a boyfriend, a yoga routine. My friends and family worried, but I kept them at arm's length. Meanwhile, I tried to wrestle the sucker to the mat on my own. I'd quit for a week, and start up again. I'd quit in the morning and change my mind by noon. I didn't want to be an 'alcoholic' – that dirty word, so haunting and final. So I tried everything else: yoga, therapy, anti-depressants. None of it worked. If you get desperate enough, you will try anything. I tried AA. The whole cliche: 12 steps, serenity prayer, all that nonsense. The even bigger cliche: it worked. And still does today.

'I'D QUIT FOR A WEEK, AND START AGAIN. I DIDN'T WANT TO BE AN ALCOHOLIC. THAT DIRTY WORD, SO HAUNTING AND SO FINAL'

It's been five years since then, and I still miss drinking sometimes; the easy camaraderie, the full-body loosening. Sometimes I see a martini glass, the liquid sloshing up to the rim, and my mouth waters remembering the delirious sting of the first sip, that cool abandon. But I don't miss the hangovers, or the degradation, or the insane management of figuring out what I did last night, and who needs an apology. When I stopped reaching for a drink to fix any discomfort, I also started to find comfort on my own. My body grew healthier and happier. My stomach ulcer and my radioactive self-hatred have become something manageable instead of overwhelming. I became a more reliable writer. A more reliable friend. Everything I was drinking to achieve I've found in my sober life: closeness with people, creative inspiration, erotic adventure, and true confidence, the kind that doesn't come from a bottle. I pride myself on knowing who I am now. That's real power. ●

Blackout: Remembering The Things I Drank To Forget, by Sarah Hepola, is out now (Two Roads). If you're worried about any of the issues raised in this story, visit drinkaware.co.uk

she said **LISTEN** The ELLE team discuss their drinking tipping points at elleuk.com/podcasts

1. Textured jacket, £159 (from £249), and trousers, £89 (from £149), Ted Baker **2.** Silver T-shirt, £39 (from £87), French Connection **3.** Embellished top, £39 (from £65), and shorts, £29 (from £55), Coast **4.** Glitter brogues, £221 (from £500), Sonia Rykiel



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ELLE TALENT 2015: *the winning entry*

*Following our brief to write about #**RelationshipGoals**, hundreds of you entered our annual **writing competition**, now in its seventh year. After much deliberation, we picked **Lia Louis**, 28, as the winner. Lia, a copywriter from Hertfordshire, impressed our judges with her **modern love letter***

Artwork **Jung Lee**



Main Image: I Love You With All My Heart by Jung Lee. Photography: Victoria Adamson, Wolf Marloh, Silvia Olsen, Mark Rusher.

You don't have to take me to the restaurant that serves organic foam, and breasts of pigeons they swear aren't related to the ones that binge on blackberries then crap on my windscreen. Don't whisper sweet nothings over candlelight or order the wine that comes with a waiter's monologue and two minutes of awkward nodding. You needn't send flowers to my work, causing stares that make my head beam like a beef tomato. You don't have to surprise me with shopping bags, shoes, jewellery... stuff. I don't want you to fly us to white sands and crystal waters, and you don't have to be that guy, in the films – you know, the one who says all the right things and miraculously thaws an icy mood with a cuddle from behind, a nuzzle of his Gillette stubble and husky in-ear whispers of, 'Talk to me, baby, talk to me. Goddamnit, let me be there.'

You don't have to fill the bath with bubbles and petals and pack the bathroom with candles straight from a Roxette video. You don't have to write me Byron-like letters and declarations, and you don't have to rescue me. Just pass me the takeaway menu, a phone, and when I eat enough for a street party of rugby players, admire me. As I sit in my dad's old T-shirt and elastic-less pyjama bottoms, look at me like I could very well be Brigitte Bardot. Make me tea on Monday mornings despite my grunts for conversation. Send me emails. (And if the mood takes you, links to those ridiculous cat memes I love so much.)

Take long walks with me, talk about everything, nothing, ghosts, and the best thing you ever ate. And when it rains down on us and my hair mimics Meat Loaf's mane, walk proudly beside me. When I've had a bad day, pelt me with Matchmakers and clear the path to the bathtub. And when I'm in it, continue my frantic search for the Christmas sherry, and find it. (Then pour it.) Ignore the hairs on my legs, even when I throw them scratchily over you at 2am. And when I rant about that new bore at work, nod, agree, and tell me of all the wrestling moves you'd pull on him if you saw him.

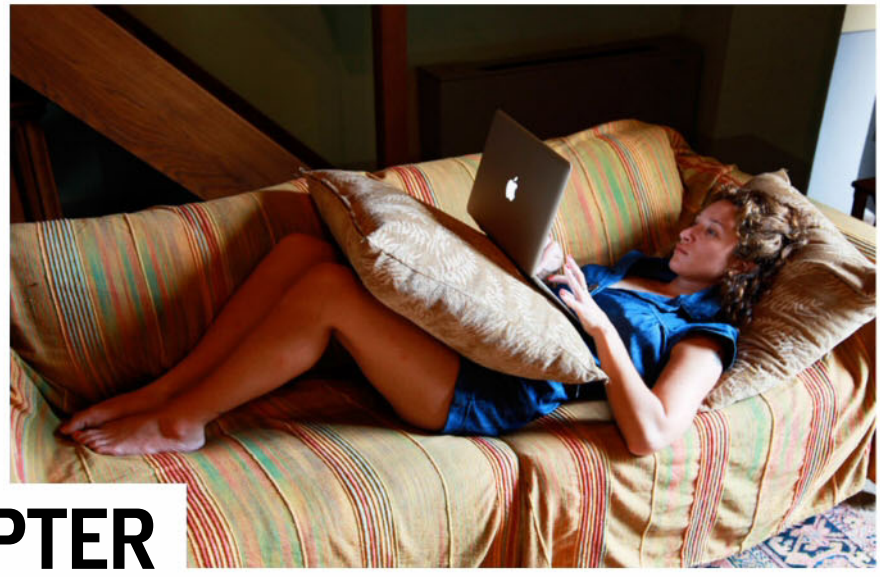
Hug me when I cry (even when there's snot) and let the only lies you tell me be that my swollen face looks bloody gorgeous mid-sinus infection, and that no, you didn't want the last Scotch egg. Talk to me. Be silent with me. Tell me secrets to keep, and keep mine. Laugh with me, laugh at me (but never when I've stubbed my toe).

When I'm wrong, tell me. When I'm right, let me dance. Tell me truths, even when they hurt me. Make fun of me. Believe in me. Sample my screwy bakes. Say, 'F*ck it,' with me. And stay, even when it'd be easier to go.

Lia and five runners-up (Jo Morey, Liz Wride, Gail Aldwin, Hila Shachar, Lauren Potts) each receive a monogrammed Smythson Soho Notebook, worth £135

ELLE **READ IT** If you loved Lia's piece, see the entries from our five runners-up at elleuk.com

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Follow Emma on
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#GIRLINTERRUPTER

Emma Forrest explores how a pair of sunglasses can become the armour we use to protect our true sense of selves

Coco Chanel said that you must look in the mirror and take one thing off – be it earrings, or necklace, or bracelet – before you leave the house. But everyone looks better in sunglasses. So much so, I always wondered why *Playboy* doesn't use them as a prop to enhance its model's nudity, the way it employs a random chain necklace or knee-high socks. The answer is, of course, that the eyes are the window to the soul and, within the plastic *Playboy* bubble, it has to cultivate the masturbatory fantasy that Miss March is not only looking right at you, but that your imaginary f*ck means something.

From the dark ages of Myspace, to the 'moment in time' of Snapchat, online life has always centred around the trying on of identities. We present ourselves as we wish to be seen, and as we wish we could be. It makes sense that with these displays of selves, sunglasses are the most important item in our wardrobes. Sunglasses draw people in and shut them out. They tell you something about the wearer, but they also bar others from seeing their eyes (and calling their bluff). 'I want you to know me for who I am (but not who I *really* am)' is the central tenet of life online. It follows that sunglasses are a major Instagram subset.

'Sunglasses, like commenting in a forum, make us feel important, even when we're not'

If you could see past my glasses, you'd know I have brown eyes so, technically, my eyesight is stronger and I need them less than my light-eyed friends. December may seem an odd time to be writing this column, but I belong to that tribe who use them as a year-round crutch (not literally – breaking expensive glasses is even worse than losing expensive sunglasses, since the latter at least allows the fantasy that someone somewhere picked them up and is showing them a good time, taking them out on the town with the shoe I lost in a hotel room and that copy of *The Girls Of Slender Means* I left on the New York subway).

In reflecting on my deflectors, I've been thinking a lot about the term 'tabula rasa', which I first heard on a psychiatrist's couch – it means the absence of preconceived ideas. It was explained to me that all knowledge comes from perception (hence people who see the world through 'rose-tinted spectacles').

My most faithful sunglasses are Karen Walker's Atomic in black filigree. I thought the filigree around the rims depicted bunnies but the closer I look, the more I decide they are skulls of bunnies. I lit her lightness with the last drips of my old struggles with darkness, which I still carry daily, but in a safe, domestic way (such as within the filigree of my Perspex frames).

Sunglasses are (after red lipstick) the extravagance that can most affordably elevate the perceived worth of anybody's outfit. Sunglasses, like commenting in an internet forum, make us feel important, even when we are not. A dear friend of mine who was once super-wealthy is now broke, and tenuously maintains her dignity on the yachts and private planes of the family she works for (where once she was in their place) by never letting go of her massive Tom Ford frames.

During a visit to London, I travel 20 tube stops (on the above-ground stations, with my glasses on) to a sample sale, where I pick up three pairs of sunglasses, named Ortolan, Okura, and Avida Dollars; names that conjure the kind of fantasies I generally have playing behind my eyes. And here's where I can make my best defence for wearing sunglasses year round: as a writer, I do most of my writing when I'm in motion (be that hiking or riding the bus). I have a very open, expressive face, and tend to emote as I think. Sunglasses have become a force field for me, to try to keep my best ideas secure, so I can make it home and write them down before they escape into the ether.

I picked it up from an old hero of mine who I used to see walking around New York wearing his dark glasses day and night, summer and winter: Lou Reed. Possibly the same pair he'd had on since The Velvet Underground launched in 1964. I'd fantasise, 'Maybe that guy's not an insecure ego-tripper, maybe he's just writing something wonderful behind there.' This was before social media, but I stuck him front and centre in my mental Pinterest board. I think of him, as the snow starts to fall and my shades stay in place.

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FASHION

ELLE

№1 *ELLE meets Lupita Nyong'o, Hollywood's newest power player* ***№2*** *Poetry in motion: set your inner country girl free in chunky knits and vintage-print dresses. Shot on location at Dylan Thomas's Boathouse in Laugharne, Wales*







This page: Silk-organza dress and leather belt, both Alexander McQueen. Leather sandals (just seen), Charlotte Olympia
Opposite: Black and white silk jacket and black nylon body, both Chanel. Gold earrings, Alexis Bittar



THE LUPITA NYONG'O POWER



AWAKENS

What is it like to go from obscurity to first-name-only fame in less than two years? ***Lupita Nyong'o,*** *an African Oscar winner and first black Lancôme ambassador, gets vulnerable about how it feels to have the world's hopes and expectations on her shoulders*

Words **Kenya Hunt** Photography **Kai Z Feng** Fashion **Anne-Marie Curtis**

Opposite: Silk jacket and sequinned silk-mix skirt, both Givenchy

@LUPITANYONGO

It's not uncommon to hear someone who is particularly smart, talented or unstoppable described as a 'force' – as in, someone of incredible strength, power or intensity. A remover of obstacles, so to speak. The entire *Star Wars* franchise is based around the idea of using such energy for good or evil and what happens when we grapple with it, lose it, summon it. May the force be with you, and all of that.

If anyone understands this fictitious power, it's Lupita Nyong'o, a woman from Kenya who was told she was the opposite of what would work in Hollywood, and then rose to first win an Oscar, and next a high-profile part in a £20 billion blockbuster franchise.

When we meet for dinner to discuss life and her latest role in *Star Wars Episode VII: The Force Awakens*, the newest instalment in arguably the world's biggest and most iconic film series of all time, I have high expectations. This is a woman whose progress my social network has celebrated as if she's one of our own. A person who appears as regularly in my social-media feeds as my old schoolmates and closest friends: when she won her Oscar for *12 Years A Slave* in March last year, nearly every person I know celebrated it on Facebook. When she twirled on the Cannes red carpet resplendent in emerald Gucci pleats, the image filled my Instagram with effusive captions, such as 'Yaaaaassss', 'Life made!' and the ultimate sign of approval: praise-hand emojis. And when she became Lancôme's first-ever black ambassador, my peers retweeted the historic news with wild abandon. She had become the fun-loving, affable, fiercely admired, imaginary new addition to my global network of girlfriends – when, just two years ago, we had never even heard her name.

LUPITA ON SOCIAL MEDIA

'Instagram is the only one I do. I like it because it's a snippet of the world. And it reminds me of the importance of beauty. There's enough ugly in the world. Just to have a break with beauty appeals to me a lot. It adds a quality to life when you can appreciate something beautiful. Because really that's a privilege. It's a luxury. So for me, Instagram is my way of sharing that. How I like to use social media is to say something that is beautiful, helpful or necessary.'

But the woman who is sharing a leather banquette with me now is all controlled, coolly polite professionalism, regarding me with the tiniest hint of wariness – one more celebrity in New York, one more writer prepared to analyse her. She is, indeed, a force. But a somewhat impenetrable one to start with. One who sets a timer with an alarm to make sure our interview doesn't run over the agreed 90 minutes.

'I grew up the child of a politician, and [it] influenced how I interacted with the idea of my public persona. You learn your public persona is not your only persona,' she later tells me, once we've bonded over shared fries. It just takes her a little while to get there. I can't blame her. I'm not always the most open book, either, and I'm not even famous. Lupita hasn't always been globally known, but she has grown up the child of privilege and prominence. Born into political exile 32 years ago in Mexico City to a college professor-turned-politician, Peter, and his wife, Dorothy (who is now the managing director and head of public relations at the Africa Cancer Foundation), she then grew up in Nairobi, Kenya, as the middle-class second child of six. Lupita and I spent our formative years on opposite sides of the Atlantic (I was born in Germany, and then raised in Virginia), but consumed a lot of the same pop culture, like Disney films and, yes, *Star Wars*.

She watched *Return Of The Jedi* on school public holidays. 'It was a big deal when it came on television, because there were, like, two stations and the programming would normally start at four and end at 11. But during public holidays you'd get TV all day. And *Star Wars* was a part of that.'

Long before *12 Years A Slave* was a twinkle in Steve McQueen's eye, Lupita dreamt of one day following her aunt into the theatre. 'She was a stage actress and really the one who shepherded me onto the stage. I loved playing make-believe and I was basically one of these children who had a wild imagination and didn't necessarily think logically. For a very long time I thought that a television was a display of a little village with little people in the TV performing these things, and no one could tell me otherwise. I really enjoyed that thought,' she says.

But eventually, like many little girls all over the world, she began to realise a lot of the people she saw in her TV made her feel lesser than them. 'If you turn on the television and you are not represented there, you become invisible to yourself. And there was very little of myself that I saw on TV, or in the movies that I was watching, or in magazines that were lying around in salons or the house. And so these are subconscious things. Yes, Western beauty standards are things that affect the entire world. And then what happens? You're a society that doesn't value darker skin.'

She remembers one popular commercial as being especially damaging. 'There was an ad that ran on TV about a woman dressed for a job interview and she got turned down. And then she used a specific cream and you see her skin get lighter and she gets the job. So that's the message you are absorbing,' she says.

The messaging played out in Lupita's real-life interactions as well. 'I tried out for roles for TV spots and things like that, and I remember hearing the words, ›



Opposite: Silk top and silk skirt, both Lanvin. Leather sandals (just seen), Jimmy Choo. Gold earrings, as before

"You are too dark for television," so you hear those things; you are not walking around thinking you're beautiful.'

There's a very grown-up seriousness to Lupita that seems to run counter to the girlish, playful, ingénue I'm used to seeing on talk shows and Instagram. And this surprises me, mostly because I've come to associate her with those smiling selfies and fun anecdotes on late-show appearances. She's the foil to the goofy, cool girls who are Hollywood's most popular right now – the Jennifer Lawrences and the Amy Schumers – with all their viral red-carpet blunders and TMI.

'You need the yin and the yang,' she explains. But the more I listen to Lupita talk, I realise it's less about a gravity of spirit, and more about self-preservation. Her inarguable beauty may be effortless, but she's had to work hard to protect her sense of self. It's why she tends to speak in earnest, inspirational sound bites, like her now-famous Oscar-night speech, because Lupita knows what it's like to be the little girl who is now reading this magazine and looking up to her.

And it's here, during this moment, that she and I begin to feel less like subject and interviewer, and more like two women who both grew up with a deep need to challenge the world to go against type.

It wasn't until Lupita's parents sent her back to Mexico when she was 16 to learn Spanish, living with her then-19-year-old sister, that she began to appreciate her own beauty and develop the thick skin that would help to her navigate Hollywood. 'It was less like a homecoming than a homegoing. It felt like I was going to learn something about who I was.'

LUPITA ON AGEISM

'Mexico taught me to get over ageism. When I was there, I had no friends my age. And so I developed friendships with older people and we all had that child in us that never really goes away. And to be able to see that as a teenager, to see people at 35, 45, even people in their 60s, I realised that I never want to allow for age to be the reason to curtail the potential for a connection.'

They lived in Taxco, an ethnically homogenous small town, where she went to school. 'I definitely remember crying a lot in the beginning because I missed my home, my friends and I didn't know the language. And it was isolating. So isolating.'

She began to get catcalled on the street for the first time, which made the already emotionally fraught experience of coming of age in a foreign place even more complicated. 'The attention on the street was shell-shocking. We were an oddity. People would stop and take pictures of us just because we are black. And it was a time during that tricky adolescent phase when you're coming into yourself and you're trying to pave your own way, but you're insecure about where you lie. It devastated me,' she says. 'Sometimes you just don't want to stand out.'

She eventually met a photographer through a mutual friend while out at a festival in a local town square. He asked to photograph her. 'And nobody had *ever* asked that of me before. So of course I was like, "Ah, OK." And I went a few weeks later and was photographed by him.'

In a way, the event was transformative. And as she talks me through that first shoot, our interview almost becomes therapy, with Lupita having epiphanies and drawing parallels between now and then. 'There are many ways a photographer can pump up your spirits. And that was so therapeutic. I really wish every girl could have that opportunity to have that experience. So that was the first time I felt beautiful, that I felt worth a photograph. It's not something I've fully unpacked yet, fully investigated. It's crazy, now that I'm talking about it; it's the camera that boosted my confidence, but it is the gaze that kind of shook it and disoriented it.'

She stops eating her seared salmon, as if she's thinking about how to phrase what she's going to say next. 'I don't think being conspicuous is a state we're supposed to live in, or at least not permanently. I wish there were a dial we could turn up and down. And in a sense I can, by making very deliberate choices about what I do and when and how, and with whom. But I do think my time in Mexico, now that I'm thinking about it, really prepared me for all of this,' she says alluding to her current fame. 'I was very conspicuous. But I had to get on with my life. I had to get to school even if all the construction workers were calling my name – and it is Mexican, so it was very easy for them to remember. I walked to school for 25 minutes and all [the way] I'd hear, "Hola, Lupita Morenita [brown girl]." Yeah, it was a really small town.'

For the record, Lupita seems to have a certain degree of anonymity in the restaurant. With the exception of our waitress, no one even seems to recognise her. And she admits that she takes the subway without too many interruptions. But New York has always been a city that prides itself on being above the superfans and the star-struck. That doesn't negate the fact that Lupita has reached a level of first-name-only fame in less than two years that most actresses take decades to achieve. She lets out a long, sing-songy sigh when I say this. 'I think what I've learnt is I'm only a celebrity when I encounter someone who thinks of me that way. Otherwise I'm not. It's the moments when I'm not in that zone and it happens to me, and I'm like, "Ah, I wasn't ready!"' The ›










This page and opposite: Silk dress, Gucci. Silk bra and knickers, both La Perla



Opposite: Gold necklace, Miansai. Gold bracelet, Alexis Bittar. Gold rings, both Michelle Campbell

release of *Star Wars* will only deepen her popularity, and she gets genuinely giddy at the idea of being inducted into the sci-fi club. 'The film hasn't been released yet, *so* I've only had a light orientation in that. But I was at [Disney's D23 expo] recently where I was on stage with Harrison Ford and the excitement was just so high. And for me, it was just so cool. I can be geekish. I can be a dork. It feels like I've been at the best party.'

The film was her first experience playing a CGI-animated character, something she had been curious to do after watching and admiring similar roles played by Zoe Saldana, Bradley Cooper and Benedict Cumberbatch. It's also, interestingly, an opportunity for her to transcend race or gender altogether. Maz, her character, is beyond any debates about skin tone. 'The opportunity to play a CGI character for me was the opportunity to not be limited by my physical circumstances. I could experience being bigger or smaller, something totally different to who I am. And of course it's in a galaxy far, far away.'

She'll play another animated character, Raksha, in *The Jungle Book*, the second of three Disney films she's made in the past year. In the third, the Mira Nair-directed *Queen Of Katwe*, she plays the mother to real-life Ugandan chess prodigy Phiona Mutesi.

But it's her role producing and starring in the film adaptation of bestselling and Beyoncé-sampled novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah* that is the purest example of Lupita as Force with a capital F.

'*Americanah* is something I went after before anyone knew who I was,' she says. 'I read the book and said, "I *have* to do this."' So she got in touch with Chimamanda through a friend. And now, as an Oscar winner, she's making the film with a little help from Brad Pitt, who is producing the movie through his company Plan B.

Lupita sees this as an opportunity to make the stories that were missing from her own childhood. 'I felt like I had never read a book nor experienced a story that so richly and adequately described and expressed what it's like to be an African elsewhere. So I felt such a strong relationship to it. And what I loved about it was that it's unapologetically a love story. That, too, was so refreshing, the fact that these two Nigerians, these two people forced apart by circumstances and into these worlds in which they don't necessarily belong, go looking for home and end up finding it in each other. And within that story you're confronted with all of these interesting social questions such as, "What's the difference between being an African in America and an African-American?" And you just feel seen. There's a power in that,' she says. 'I remember reading it and thinking, "I'd love to see this story played on screen, and I *want* to play that role."'

That two of her upcoming film projects are centred around African characters isn't intentional, but Lupita does admit it's important. '[My work] is not limited to Africa, but Africa is my first paradigm so it's something I feel a little starved for. Now that I have some small platform, I want to use it to tell those stories.' Much like her part in bringing the play *Eclipsed*, about four captive wives of a rebel soldier in the second Liberian Civil War, from being a pipe dream at Yale (she understudied for it as a student) to a full-blown New York reality (she made her off-Broadway debut in October): 'I get my mind fixed on something and I find a way to do it.' Early press for the production has already been glowing, with a recent *The New York Times* article calling it a 'feminist reading' of the African country's internal conflict. *The Guardian*, meanwhile, described Lupita's performance as 'immediate and devastating'.

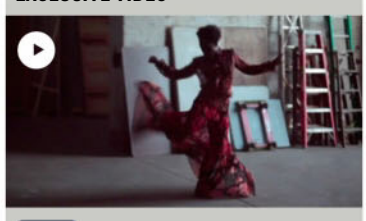
To chart Lupita's career is to watch a woman quietly and elegantly raze her way through obstacles to score a string of record-setting firsts. 'I know being an African woman on a Hollywood platform is not something you see every day, and I feel how special that is and I respect it. And I signed up for it. I wouldn't trade it,' she says. 'I definitely don't think it should be left up to me to represent an entire continent in this industry. And that's not the case. But someone has to go first, and if one of those people is me, than yes please.' May the force be with her. ●

Star Wars VII: The Force Awakens is in cinemas 17 December

LUPITA ON GETTING DRESSED

'There's a steady flow of [free] clothes, but I definitely give [some away as gifts]. I get overwhelmed by possessing too many things at the same time. I'm usually dressing in a panic; the headache of what to wear every day. Especially now that I'm in rehearsal. I procrastinate and the next thing I know it's almost time to leave [the house] and I have to put something on my body. It's definitely a lot more fun getting dressed when someone is helping you.'

EXCLUSIVE VIDEO



WATCH IT
Go behind the scenes of our Lupita shoot at elleuk.com/tags/video

Hair: Vernon François at Smiths Salon Soho/ RnD Creatives Ltd. Make-up: Hung Vanngo at The Wall Group. Manicure: Casey Herman at Kate Ryan. Set: Lou Asaro at Marek & Associates. Filmography: Samantha Casolari. The team stayed at The Plaza (fairmont.com/the-plaza-new-york). With thanks to: 1896 Studios, Brooklyn. For shopping details, see Address Book.



Poetry *in* motion

Set your inner country girl free in chunky knits and *free-spirited* printed dresses. Clogs and knee-high socks add to the *offbeat vibe*. The march of the *individualist* continues

Photography **Aitken Jolly** Fashion **Anne-Marie Curtis** Models **Antonia Wesseloh and George Griffiths**
Shot on location in Dylan Thomas's Boathouse, Laugharne, Wales



Cashmere cardigan, £300, Barrie. Nylon top, £250, Michael Kors Collection. Cotton skirt, £680, Fendi. Leather sandals (worn throughout), £50, Rokit. Cotton socks (top), £50, and cotton socks (underneath), £165, both Prada, both worn throughout





This page: Antonia wears: Wool cardigan, £935, and silk dress, £2,350, both Saint Laurent. George wears: Wool cardigan, £1,250, Saint Laurent. Cotton shirt, £150, Universal Works. Cashmere trousers, £130, Brooks Brothers
Opposite: Polyester dress, £2,695, and silk blouse (worn underneath), £2,300, both Louis Vuitton

Aitken Jolly



Aitken Jolly



This page: Cream cashmere cardigan, £325, Madeleine Thompson. Black and red cotton-mix dress, £2,470, Bottega Veneta. Brown cotton socks (top), £50, and black cotton socks (underneath), £165, both Prada, both worn throughout
Opposite: Wool jumper, £480, cotton top (worn underneath), £255, and cotton skirt, £690, all Prada

Antonia wears: Multicoloured silk dress, £6,000, Gucci. Red silk scarf, £39, Brooks Brothers. George wears: Grey wool jumper, £150, and black and white shirt, £120, both YMC. Red silk scarf, £50, Richard James





Aitken Jolly



This page: Red cotton cardigan, white and blue silk shirt, and blue denim shorts, all price on request, all Dolce & Gabbana
Opposite: Antonia wears: Cashmere cardigan, £1,030, Barrie. Cotton dress, £1,995, Burberry. George wears: Wool jumper, £525, Gucci. Cotton shirt, £310, Marni. Silk scarf, as before

Aitken Jolly





Aitken Jolly



This page and opposite:
Multicoloured cashmere jumper, £1,980, Chloé. Black and red silk dress, £945, Christopher Kane



This page: Wool cardigan, £285, & Daughter. Wool top, £2,900, and silk shorts, £950, both Dior. Silk scarf, as before
Opposite: Cotton-mix coat, £850, Margaret Howell. Wool jumper, £630, Christopher Kane. Leather shorts, £2,200, Chanel. Silk scarf, £175, Coach



Aitken Jolly





Antonia wears: Silk dress, £1,820, Erdem. George wears: Wool-mix jacket, £995, John Varvatos. Cotton shirt, £105, Universal Works. Cashmere trousers, £130, Brooks Brothers. Leather shoes, £125, G.H. Bass & Co. Silk scarf, £175, Coach. For shopping details, see Address Book. Hair: Stephen Low at Neville Hair & Beauty using L'Oréal. Make-up: Mel Arter at CLM Hair and Make Up using Givenchy. Models: Antonia Wesseloh at Elite London and George Griffiths at Select. Shot on location in Laugharne, Carmarthenshire, including The Dylan Thomas Boathouse (discovercarmarthenshire.com) and the Tin Shed Experience (tinshedexperience.co.uk). The team stayed at The Corran Resort & Spa (thecorran.com)


Beanie-Free Winters are Aussome
Take that, sub-zero temperatures.
In your face, frizz.
Get your mitts on
Aussie's Winter Miracle range,
with Australian Ginseng
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For a beanie-beating barnet
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3 MINUTE MIRACLE
WINTER REMEDY
DEEP TREATMENT
WINTERDOM FIGHTER
250 ml e
AUSSIE
There's more to life than hair but it's a good place to start



#TRIALATREND

Well bred: Groomed, but not too groomed; like you spent the day horseriding on your estate

The BEST BEAUTY products IN THE WORLD right now

From wonder foundation to the ultimate mascara, these are the 14 products that really work. Voted for by ELLE's 46 International Editors

Photography: Jason Lloyd-Evans.

Beauty's ROCK STARS

Photography **Aaron Tilley**
Set design **Carrie Louise**

As voted by the ELLE Beauty Editors, these are the world's best hair, make-up and skincare products



Best perfume

AZZEDINE ALAÏA PARIS EDP, £42 FOR 30ML

Such a perfect liquefied representation of the fashion brand, it's hard to believe this complex and beautiful perfume wasn't around last year. It's the right contrast of red pepper and musk mixed with rose, freesia and peony.

Most iconic beauty product

YVES SAINT LAURENT TOUCHE ÉCLAT, £25

Think of this as a lifetime achievement award for this most cult of products (the multi-tasking, skin-perfecting, all-round wonder concealer pen). One is still sold every minute. Unquestionably the winner of this category.

Best mascara

DIOR DIORSHOW MASCARA, £24.50

Inspired by the toothbrushes make-up artists use backstage to get that flawless false-lash effect, the oversized wand is magic. It was reformulated this year, so it's beaten its own high standard. An easy win.

Best lip colour

CLINIQUE POP LIP COLOUR AND PRIMER, £16

Ordinarily, you'd most likely choose between colour pay-off and moisturising benefits, but this hybrid does both in equal measure, which is why it was the favourite. Plus, the pigmentation is exceptional.



Best foundation

LANCÔME MIRACLE CUSHION, £29.50

An easy foundation for beginners with a compact-style application that is designed to deliver the perfect amount of foundation every time. It has a lovely weightless feeling and it's also moisturising. Game changer. ›


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Best anti-cellulite product

CLARINS MASVELT BODY SHAPING CREAM*, £40

There are several specialised ingredients in this formula, encouraging the production of skin-firming collagen to such a degree that we would notice a difference, even without the hardcore massage-application technique. Because we can't always be bothered with that. You should though, for even better results.

Best suncare product

SISLEY SUPER SOIN SOLAIRE MILKY BODY MIST SPF 30, £83

If ever a sunscreen could be sexy, this one is it. While the lotion protects your skin from UVA and UVB rays, it also hydrates, protecting it from other ageing factors such as pollution. Plus, it leaves a beautiful sheen on the skin, which makes us want to wear it out of the sun, too.



Best body moisturiser

VICHY IDEAL BODY BALM*, £16

When you combine ingredients traditionally used for facial moistursiers with body-nourishing oils, you get a hydrating, softening, plumping body moisturiser that's worthy of its 'best in the world' status. Obviously. ›

Photography: Aaron Tilley. *These products are currently not available in the UK.

Best shampoo

KÉRASTASE RÉSISTANCE BAIN THÉRAPISTE, £17.50

A soothing balm for your hair, coating it to properly repair damage without weighing it down, making it just as good for thin hair as it is for thick.



Best conditioner

RENÉ FURTERER ABSOLUE KÉRATINE MASK, £29.50

Anyone who has processed or heat-styled their hair a bit too much (ie everyone) should put this on their wish list. Leaving it on for a full eight minutes is akin to having a glossing treatment at the salon.

Best hair styling product

BUMBLE AND BUMBLE SURF INFUSION, £9.50

The cult surf spray has a new, upgraded version that gives the effect of tousled, beachy hair, without the crackling dryness of a typical sea salt spray. It's like the ocean, but with added conditioning oil. ›

Photography: Aaron Tilley.

for DEFYING nature



Blistex
For Lips. For Life.™

Blistex Relief Cream is a medicine for chapped lips. Always read the label.

Best mask

CAUDALIE INSTANT DETOX MASK, £22

This mask is 99% natural clay, ie the classic (and still most effective) way to draw out toxins. It smooths skin and tightens pores. And you only have to use it twice a week to notice a difference.

Best moisturiser

CHANEL HYDRA BEAUTY MICRO SÉRUM, £59

The way the serum is constructed is exceptional in itself: the active ingredients are suspended in droplets that burst only when they touch your skin. It's water-light in texture and makes skin feel moisturised – all day.



Best anti-ageing product

ESTÉE LAUDER NEW DIMENSION EXPERT LIQUID TAPE, £46

How best to describe this revolution in anti-ageing? Well, imagine tape that holds your wrinkles smooth, but in liquid, paint-on form. Once you've applied it to the lined areas of your face, it creates a seal that pulls your skin taught. Crazy, futuristic, innovative and amazing.

ELLE **SHOP IT** For more must-try products, see elleuk.com/beauty

Compiled by: Sophie Beresiner, Natalie Lukaitis. Photography: Aaron Tilley. For shopping details, see Address Book.

for the ZING



Blistex
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For Life.™

Blistex Relief Cream is a medicine for chapped lips. Always read the label.

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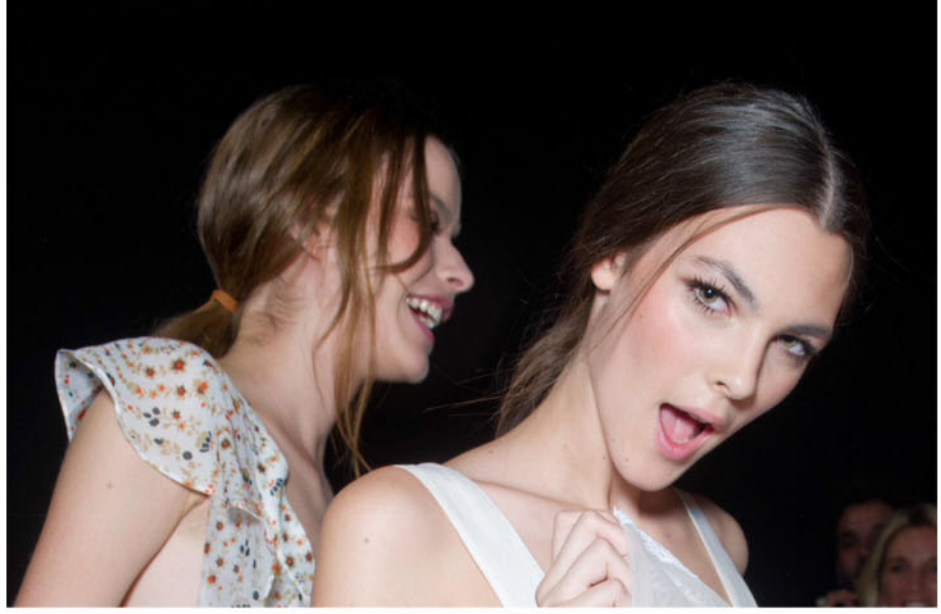
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TEAR AND WEAR



Nº28

FRIDAY-NIGHT HAIR

Your topknot is NFI to this party. It's time to take an artfully 'undone' ponytail out on the town

The ingredients



Shampoo
L'Occitane Volumizing Shampoo, £17



Conditioner
Kiehl's Rice & Wheat Volumizing Conditioning Rinse, £19



Mousse
Tresemmé Volume & Lift Extra Body Mousse, £5.25



Hairdryer
ghd Air Hairdryer, £99



Brush
Mason Pearson Brush Extra Large, £123



Comb
Denman D19 Tail Comb, £2.09



Hairband
Hershesons Clear Snagless Hairbands, £3.95



Curling tongs
Babyliss Curling Wand Pro, £25



Hairgrips
Boots Essentials Hair Grips, £1.39



Hairspray
Rahua Defining Hair Spray, £34

The directions

1 **Use a volumising shampoo and conditioner**. These formulas are lighter than most others, so they won't weigh down your hair.
2 **Work a small amount** of volumising mousse into your palm, then run your fingers through your hair.
3 **Flip your head upside down** and blow-dry on a medium heat before giving it a cool shot all over to set the volume.
4 **Starting from the crown** of your head, tease your roots by brushing your hair from half way along the shaft, towards your scalp, using short, quick strokes.
5 **Tease your hair,** section by section, with a comb. Work towards your hairline and stop about two inches from the front.
6 **Loosely brush** the teased hair backwards using your fingers, then gently comb the surface with a boar-bristle brush to give it a smooth finish.
7 **Collect your hair** into a ponytail at the back and secure with an elastic band.
8 **Using curling tongs**, wrap the length of your ponytail around the barrel for a bouncy, polished finish.
9 **Part the hair** at the front that hasn't been teased to your preferred side. Wrap both sides around to the back of your head, just below your ponytail and secure with hairgrips.
10 **Mist all over** with a medium- to flexible-hold hairspray. It's less heavy than one with a firm hold, so won't deflate the volume you've created.

Substitutions and additions

CURLY HAIR

SWAP Relax your curls with Bumble and bumble Curl Conscious Smoothing Shampoo, £18.50, and Conditioner, £20.50.
+ ADD Use a round brush while blow-drying your hair to straighten it.

SHORT HAIR

SWAP Instead of pulling your hair into a ponytail, fold one half section of your hair over the other and secure at the back with grips.
+ ADD A headband will create volume at the back and keep the front smooth.

FINE HAIR

+ ADD Cut a hair doughnut in half and fix in place at the crown of your head, then brush your hair over to conceal it.
+ ADD If you don't have a lot of hair to tease, bulk it out by sprinkling with a volumising dust first.

ELLE **SEE IT** Get inspired by AW15's trends at elleuk.com/beauty

Compiled by: Natalie Lukaitis. Photography: Jason Lloyd-Evans. For shopping details, see Address Book.



1 De-puff The skin around your eyes is very sensitive, so when you apply eye cream to get rid of puffiness, use your ring finger. This will apply just the right amount of pressure to push the product in without damaging your skin.



[ELLE loves Fresh Rose Hydrating Eye Gel Cream, £33.] **2 Start smooth** Prepare your eyelids with a primer [try Laura Mercier Eye Basics, £21] to create a smooth base. This will help



the liner to glide on evenly and stay put throughout the day, especially if you have oily skin. **3 Texture matters** For definition, you'll need to use a cream or liquid liner [ELLE loves Maybelline Eye Studio Master Precise Ink Pen



Eyeliner, £4.99]. If you want a more diffused look, try a kohl pencil and blur the edges with an eyeshadow brush. If you want to create a smokey look, use Laura Mercier Kajal D'Orient Eye Liner, £22 – it's really easy to smudge. **4 Keep it straight** Start at the centre of your lash line and draw small dashes towards the outer edge. Then line from the inner corner to the centre of the eye, connecting the liner. My tip is to lightly sketch liner with an eye pencil on both eyes before using a liquid or cake liner. Pencil is more forgiving. **5 Next-level definition** People often line their lower waterline (the eyelid's inner rim), but they forget to line their upper waterline.

TRY IT
For more professional make-up hacks, go to elleuk.com/beauty



HOW TO DO...

PERFECT EYELINER

Make-up artist and eyeliner pioneer Laura Mercier gives her tips on how to get the flick right every time

It's difficult to do but it really makes your eye colour pop, so it's worth the effort. **6 Play with colour** To enhance green eyes, wear brown, blue or aubergine liner; to intensify blue eyes, try navy or copper. Hazel eyes come alive with



purple and green liners, while brown eyes look sultry with black and a deep navy. **7 Fix it** My number-one secret for touching up mistakes is Laura Mercier Secret Camouflage, £26.50. I use it to refine the edges of liner and create precision. Apply it with an angled brush for ease [ELLE loves Urban Decay Perversion Angled Brush, £12.50]. **8 Bright whites** To make the whites of your eyes look brighter and whiter, use a navy shade along your lid, which will counteract any yellow tones, and a light-coloured pencil on your waterline, which will naturally brighten your eyes [ELLE loves Benefit Eye Bright Pencil, £15.50]. **9 Take it off** Soak a cotton-wool pad in eye make-up remover [ELLE loves Vichy Purete Thermale Waterproof Eye Make-up Remover For Sensitive Eyes, £11] and gently press to the eyelid for a few seconds. This will allow the eye make-up remover to dissolve the liner, making for a more gentle process.



Compiled by: Natalie Lukaitis. Photography: Jason Lloyd-Evans, Graham Walser for Hearst Studios. For shopping details, see Address Book.

"when looking to nail best dressed... I always consider the **fringe factor.**"

Essie

essie

My "luxeffects" were designed to dazzle! So brush on some brilliance and add a glamorous glimmer to your next mani.



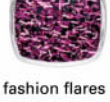
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fringe factor

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WINTER SKIN MUST-HAVE

Super smooth

Get silky-smooth skin whatever the weather with some great winter skincare advice from Gillette Venus ambassador ***Emma Willis***



@GILLETTEVENUSUK

With the party season in full swing the need to look your best is ever present. But it can feel like a challenge if you find your skin feels more sensitive at this time of year. 'I find the cold weather and central heating leaves it feeling more dull, dry and easily irritated,' agrees TV presenter Emma Willis, 'so finding little ways to make my skincare work harder is my winter beauty priority.'

For an 'extra winter glow' Emma recommends using a vitamin C-enriched moisturiser. 'I also eat lots of skin-friendly foods, such as avocado,' she notes.

Most important is to take a top-to-toe approach to winter skincare. Emma recommends showering in warm, rather than hot, water. ('My beautician tells me that when water is too hot it dries out your skin.') And because smooth skin is important any time of year, she also recommends the Venus Embrace Sensitive razor.

The Venus Embrace Sensitive was rated an average of 4.6 stars by boots.com shoppers

'I used to be wary about shaving in the winter when my skin feels more sensitive,' she explains. 'But Venus Embrace Sensitive has made a real difference.' With five blades and a built-in moisture strip, it has been designed to help you get silky smooth results with less feel of irritation, even on sensitive skin. And it's not just Emma who's a fan – the razor was rated an average of 4.6 stars* by boots.com shoppers.

'Having silky smooth skin in winter makes me feel great,' Emma says. 'Just because it's colder, I still love to look after myself and feel at my best.' Hear, hear.



Dermatologically tested, the Venus Embrace Sensitive razor has been designed for less feel of irritation, even on sensitive skin**. Let it help you get silky-smooth skin, whatever the weather

TRY IT Discover it for yourself: Venus Embrace Sensitive razor is half-price in selected Boots stores until 29 December 2015***. Find out more at **boots.com**

*Based on an average rating of 321 reviews on boots.com, October 2015. **Vs Simply Venus.
*** Offer ends 29/12/15. Was £10.99; now £5.49. Subject to availability. Selected stores only

#ELLEBEAUTYCUPBOARD



Candice Swanepoel

The 27-year-old Victoria's Secret model, ELLE cover star and brand ambassador for Max Factor reveals her beauty routine

SIGNATURE SCENT
I always wear Victoria's Secret Bombshell Eau de Parfum, £35 for 50ml. It's fruity at the start and then settles into a musky floral, so I can wear it all day.





DAY TO NIGHT
I keep my day look simple with a light foundation, such as Max Factor Miracle Match Foundation, £12.99, some mascara and a lip tint [ELLE loves Max Factor Lipfinity Lipstick in Just Deluxe, £8.99].

HAIR HERO
My hair gets really dry when I'm on set from the amount of styling it goes through, so I use products that contain avocado oil to give it back some moisture [ELLE loves Kiehl's Strengthening And Hydrating Hair Oil-In-Cream, £19].

BEAUTY OBSESSION
I recently shot the Max Factor campaign with Pat McGrath and fell in love with its Velvet Volume False Lash Effect Mascara, £10.99. It makes my lashes feel soft and smooth.



SKIN SAVIOURS
I use coconut oil to take off my make-up and moisturise with BioTherm Aquasource Deep Serum, £34.70 [available on Amazon]. I also love Bio-Oil, £19.99, and Palmer's Cocoa Butter Formula Body Lotion, £4.15.

HANDBAG ESSENTIALS
My skin is quite oily, so I keep Max Factor Facefinity Compact, £10.99, and blotting papers [ELLE recommends DHC Oil Blotting Paper, £4] in my bag to keep it in check.

READ IT
For our quick-fire, five-minute Q&A with Candice, visit elleuk.com/beauty

Compiled by: Natalie Lukaitis. Photography: Luke J Albert, Getty. For shopping details, see Address Book.



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SOPHIE BERESINER
BEAUTY DIRECTOR

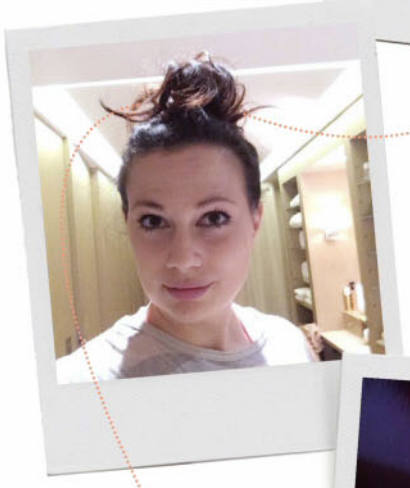
Elegantly *wasted*

*The **I Don't Care** (But I Do, Really) **make-up** trend is not as easy as it sounds. ELLE's Beauty Director Sophie Beresiner decodes it for you*

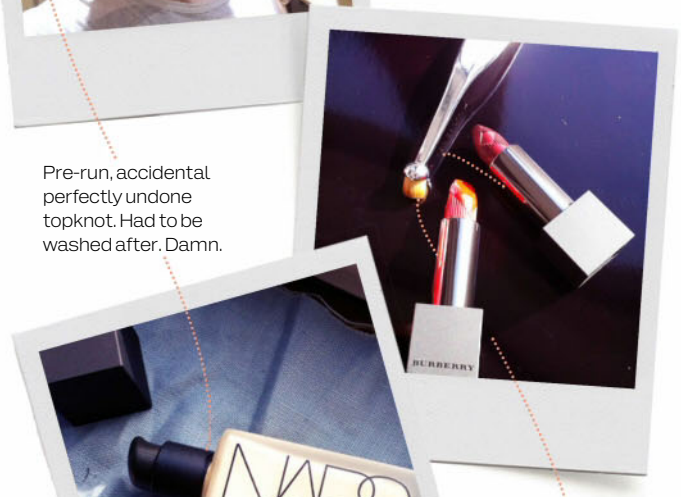


Topshop Kohl Pencil in Coal, £4
A great combination of sticky but moveable, so bits of it stay where it should while the rest does its thing with the Embryolisse moisturiser.

YOUR UP-ALL-NIGHT KIT



Embryolisse Lait-Crème Concentré Nourishing Moisturiser, £13
As good at soothing skin as it is at distressing eye make-up.



Pre-run, accidental perfectly undone topknot. Had to be washed after. Damn.



Artis Brush Circle Brush, £25. Burberry Lip Velvet in Oxblood and Poppy Red, £26 each Matte, deeper shades do dishevelled best.

Nars Luminous Weightless Foundation, £32
You need one drop only for a really wearable combo of coverage versus real skin.

Photography: Alexandra Leese. For shopping details, see Address Book.

The 'Up All Night' beauty trend is one I can get on board with, since it suggests an imperfect ease that doesn't require much skill other than staying up all night. The thing is, this is beauty we're talking about, and the results of a night out are a world away from the contrived lived-in-look-that-isn't-actually-lived-in, and that's the one we're going for. Herein lies the problem.

I definitely prefer my hair in its just-woken-up, dishevelled topknot, a thing of mystery that I can *never* recreate when I want to. But the terrible matted flyaways at the nape of my neck mean I can't just rock it to the office. Same goes for the panda-eye kohl residue that is not just lived in, but slept in, and looks a bit grubby, frankly.

Several years of harassing top Fashion Week make-up artists backstage has taught me a thing or two about exactly how to cheat these things and, in the wake of another season of undone-but-done (Topshop Unique referenced a debauched garden party – think Princess Margaret meets Courtney Love), I thought it was time to share. It's all in the application.

SKIN
It's being called 'raw', but that word makes my skin itch, so I'm going with 'invisible make- up'. For this, you need coverage that lets your skin show through. The trick is to dilute your foundation with moisturiser, or go for a sheer option to begin with.

LIPS
Start perfect – apply with a brush right to the edges – but also with the exact and minimum delivery of product that then dabs in easily with your finger for a slightly worn-in finish. No blotting, no repeat layers.

HAIR
It needs product and tongs and ruffling and finger-brushing, but since everyone is so vastly different, I'm leaving that lesson for another day. One up-all-night-beauty-look at a time, people. My reflection is telling me I need coffee – now.

EYES
The key, and the most difficult thing to get right, because no amount of applying and rubbing will yield anything other than a smudged-in look, as opposed to the desired lived-in look (yes, there's a difference). What you need is to make it 'travel' (make-up-artist speak for 'move around and distress a bit'), and you can only do this with Embryolisse Lait-Crème Concentré Nourishing Moisturiser, £13. It's so cult that we all stocked up every time we went to a French pharmacy, but it is now available at Boots. Apply kohl pencil. Dab on Embryolisse with a cotton bud. Watch magic happen. You're welcome.

ELLE ASK IT Got a beauty question? Tweet #AskELLEBeauty @ELLEBeautyTeam every Friday

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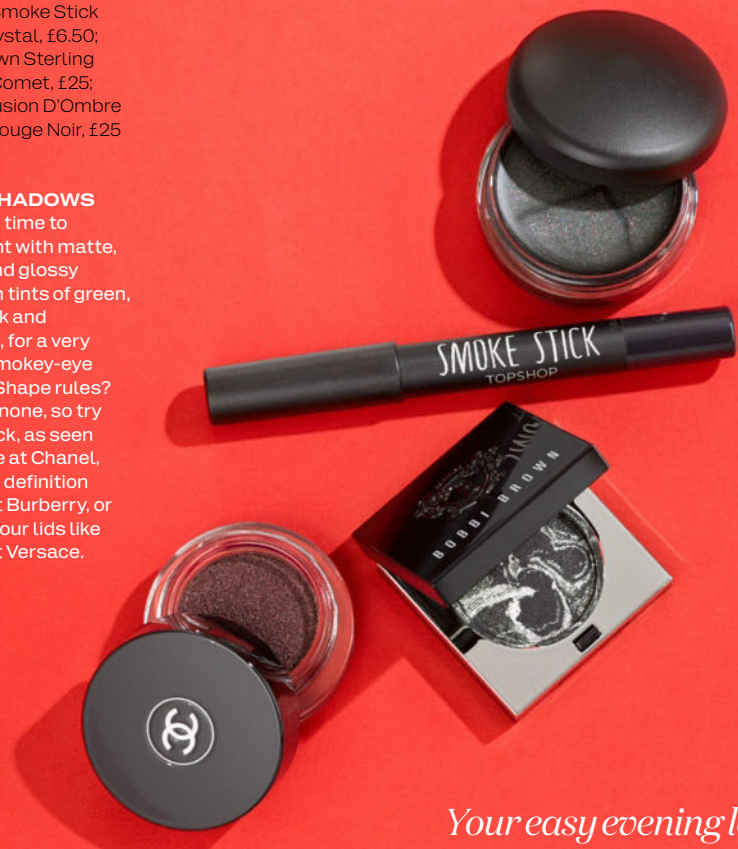
Order lines are open 8am-9.30pm (Mon-Fri), 8am-4pm (Sat)

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@ELLEBEAUTYTEAM

From top: Mac Studio Eye Gloss in Spank Me, £16; Topshop Smoke Stick in Dark Crystal, £6.50; Bobbi Brown Sterling Nights in Comet, £25; Chanel Illusion D'Ombre Velvet in Rouge Noir, £25

IN THE SHADOWS
Now is the time to experiment with matte, creamy and glossy textures in tints of green, navy, black and aubergine, for a very modern smokey-eye upgrade. Shape rules? There are none, so try a feline flick, as seen backstage at Chanel, the subtle definition spotted at Burberry, or saturate your lids like they did at Versace.



*Layer on **Soap & Glory Speed Plump Overnight Miracle Moisture Mousse, £14**, before you go to bed to help your skin retain high moisture levels throughout the following day.*



LUNCH-HOUR BUY

Your easy evening look, a revolutionary lip duo and nail polishes you need...

The beauty brief

WELL-OILED SKIN
Hang on, Elizabeth Arden hasn't done an oil till now? But it makes perfect sense. Elizabeth Arden Eight Hour Cream All-Over Miracle Oil, £29, packs all the benefits of the award-winning balm (eight hours of hydration, protection and repair), plus the collagen-boosting and skin-smoothing qualities of tsubaki oil.





BEAUTY GEM
In 1958, Lancôme founder Armand Petitjean created a piece of jewellery for the Lancôme heritage collection. Fast forward to the iconic beauty brand's 80th birthday, and it's back, reinterpreted in gold metal and encasing two shades of lipstick, specially chosen to create a graduated effect. Add this to your beauty haul. Lancôme Les Jumelles Duo, £220

SEE IT
For more new-season product news, go to elleuk.com/beauty

CULT COLLECTIONS
These are the new nail brands you need to know this season.

HJ Manicure Its thin brush makes it easy to get close to your nail base and sides without making mistakes. We love its Nail Polish in Strawberry Daiquiri, £9.50.

Jin Soon We've been waiting for celebrity and backstage nail artist Jin Soon's polishes to hit our shores, and the time has come. Get to Liberty, now. Jin Soon Nail Colour in Jasper, £15, is our pick.

Nailberry Its oxygenated formula allows air and moisture to pass through the polish, keeping your nail bed hydrated. Try its new Fast Dry Gloss, £18.

Smith & Cult This brand specialises in luxury, highly pigmented nail polishes, like its Vegas Post Apocalyptic lacquer, £19.



Compiled by: Natalie Lukaitis. Photography: Jamie Bevan. For shopping details, see Address Book.



'I tend to like a neutral palette,' says Anya of her preferred make-up style. Prep skin with **B. Prepared Anti-Blemish Make-Up Primer**, £9.99, before applying **B. Sculpted Blush & Highlight Stick**, £10.99, for a flush of colour and to accentuate cheekbones in one easy sweep



Fit for purpose

Workout guru Anya Lahiri needs a beauty routine that works as hard as she does. Enter the new ***B.*** *skincare range, exclusive to* ***Superdrug***

As a model, actress and in-demand fitness instructor (she's the power behind ELLE Fit's #MondayMove) Anya Lahiri is busy with a capital 'B'. 'My days have no routine and I have no idea what I am doing or where I will be from one day to the next,' she laughs. There is one constant, however: a commitment to great skincare. 'Exercising can take a toll on your skin if you don't look after it properly,' she explains, so regular cleansing ('I'm loving the B. Pure Micellar Cleansing Wipes, as my skin is very sensitive') and moisturising is a must. The B. Confident Blemish Serum and Gel have also proved to be winners: 'I feel far less confident in myself when I have an outbreak so I take every measure to avoid them.' Suffice to say, she's looking good.



Anya's rigorous when it comes to skincare: 'I cleanse after each class,' she says. 'The air-con in the studio makes my skin really dry, so a good moisturiser is important.' **B. Clean Melting Gel Cleanser**, £6.99, **B. Confident Day Cream**, £9.99, **B. Confident Blemish Serum**, £9.99



B. IS FOR BEAUTIFUL Create a brilliant beauty routine at an affordable price that is perfectly tailored to you with the B. make-up and skincare ranges – available exclusively from Superdrug. Go online to discover your perfect beauty boost – take the test and find out about all the products in the range at **bisforbeautiful.com**

THE YOGA DIARIES

IT'S WORTH LISTENING TO YOUR BODY, SAYS ONE GIRL WHO CAN'T STOP MOVING AND ONE WHO'D RATHER BE HORIZONTAL

@FERNROSSYOGA

THIS GIRL CAN

BY FERN ROSS, ELLE'S CHIEF SUB-EDITOR



What springs to mind when you think of yoga? Lentil-eating hippies? Old men meditating with their legs wrapped behind their head? What about chronically hyperactive exercise addicts who find it impossible to sit still? No? Well the last one is me – and I'm a yogi.

My yoga 'journey' began back in 2007, when I first moved to London as a rookie journalist. I was working nights on a national newspaper, and spent my days feeling a bit low. I was in an enormous city, surrounded by people, yet I felt totally alone. So I began to find new ways to fill my time. Yoga was one.

It started with a class at my local gym. My teacher, Maya, was relaxed, glowing, beautiful. She seemed totally content – and that was all I wanted at that time in my life. I still do. After 60 minutes, I was hooked. To begin with, I just went once a week, using yoga as a way to stretch out my muscles after cycling 20k each day to and from work. But yoga got under my skin. As someone who is borderline addicted to exercise, it was a way to calm my often-agitated body and mind.

This January, I decided I was finally going to do my yoga teacher training. I found a course that I could fit around work and signed up. But then, weeks before it was due to start, I found myself unable to walk properly after a mountain climbing weekend. An MRI scan revealed that the cartilage in my right knee had reached expiration point. But it wasn't the pain that caused me discomfort – it was the enforced resting.

I was twitchy. I was on edge. I couldn't sleep because I was fizzing with energy. I was full of self-loathing, angry at my body for betraying me. And I realised I had a problem. Why was I being so horrible to myself?

'IT DIDN'T MATTER THAT I NEEDED HELP, AND IT WAS OK THAT I COULDN'T DO EVERY SINGLE POSE'

My body clearly had limitations, and I needed to respect them. So (alongside twice-weekly physio), I learnt the art of doing nothing. Well, almost – I still swam 2k twice a week.

My yoga teacher training has facilitated this new, kinder approach to my body. One day, my tutor brought me a block to sit on as he realised I was struggling to get into a pose because of my knee, and I quietly cried into the mat. It was a breakthrough: it didn't matter that I needed help, and it was OK that I couldn't do every single pose. It was a wake-up call.

Recently, after a weekend of intensive teacher training, my knee was sore. For the first time ever, I listened. I took three whole days off exercise. I *enjoyed* having a lie-in. And when I went back to the gym, I felt stronger. The human body is an amazing thing. It tells you what it needs – the trick is to pay attention to it.

Fern teaches yoga across London. For more information, go to fernrossyoga.co.uk

VS

THIS GIRL CAN'T BE BOTHERED

BY LENA DE CASPARIS, ELLE'S CULTURE DIRECTOR



Approximately 18 minutes into my first (hot) yoga class I was certain I was about to die. Standing there – bottom over head – in a room that was 40°C, my heart started to race. The room began to spin. Then I was face down on a sweaty yoga mat. The teacher handed me some tepid water and advised that I sit out the next few moves. Naturally, everyone had twitched their heads out of their perfect postures to pity me, and I blushed in humiliation – not that anyone would have known, my face was already doing an excellent impression of a ketchup bottle.

'TAKING 90 MINUTES OUT TWICE (OK, ONCE) A WEEK TO FOCUS ON ME FEELS BRILLIANT'

I'm not a natural athlete. In fact, any amount of exercise is too much. I choose to stand still on the right side of the escalator, often take the bus one stop rather than walk, and roll my eyes at people who say a run makes them feel a natural high.

If I didn't lie awake at night worrying about eventually dying from a coronary or wasn't so vain about my appearance, I would mostly eat McCoy's Salt & Vinegar crisps in a horizontal position.

I know I have to be more active. So a year ago, having failed to even keep up with a seven-minute workout app, I decided to try yoga, based on a friend's recommendation. 'It's more omming than exertion, you'll love it,' she promised.

I signed up to a 30-day Bikram trial. As I've explained, my first experience was hell. But, miraculously, my sadist side kicked in, and I chose to persevere.

In the 12 months since, I haven't really improved. Sitting out poses still happens all the time. Oh, and I'm *always* ketchup coloured afterwards. But some totally wonderful things have actually happened too: my arse lifted a good few millimetres, and I can actually touch my toes now.

But the main benefit has been psychological. Taking 90 minutes out twice (OK, once) a week, to focus on me feels brilliant. Overall, I think I'm happier.

I know how this makes me sound. But before you worry that I've completely turned into one of those smug 'ommers', don't – I'll never give up the McCoy's.

@LENADECASPARIS



#ELLEFIT
For more fitness inspiration, visit elleuk.com/beauty/health-fitness

Photography: Instagram/fernrossyoga, Instagram/lenadecasparis.

Superwoman SYNDROME



*Are we **becoming obsessed** with overachieving? Psychologists have identified a growing disorder afflicting **hard-working,** health-obsessed, career-focused **uber-females** who relentlessly strive to be the best at everything. But would our worlds fall apart if we gave ourselves a break? ELLE's self-confessed superwoman **Lotte Jeffs** finds out*

@LOTTEJEFFS

Photography **Jan Welters**

This might sound strange, but for the past two years I've been operating in my own personal time zone, precisely 11 minutes ahead of the rest of the UK. My watch, alarm clock and iPhone all reflect this. It means I start the day ahead, and feel as though I'm winning at life before I even leave the house for work in the mornings. Of course I'm always early, but I like being the first one to arrive as it gives me time to prepare myself for whatever is in store. It's just one of the many routines I have adopted in an effort to feel superhuman.

Every day my alarm wakes me up at 6.11am Lotte Mean Time (LMT) – that's 6am for the rest of you. I do half an hour of exercise in my living room or I go for a run and then make a two-course breakfast; something you might see on a fitness blogger's Instagram, such as fruit salad followed by avocado on toast or chia seed porridge (health and fitness: tick!). As I eat, I read a newspaper and listen to Radio 4 (current affairs: tick!); I decide on an outfit that makes me look like I might know about fashion but I don't need to try too hard (cool girl: tick!); then, as I set off on my commute, I tune in to an amusing all-women discussion-panel podcast such as Slate's *Double X* (feminist who doesn't take herself too seriously: tick!). I try to get through my day at work being kind to people and efficient at my job (Sheryl Sandberg: tick!); then, in the evening, I'll see a friend or take my mum out for dinner. I will enjoy two small glasses of red wine but no dessert and be in bed by 11.30pm (supportive and responsible: tick!).

But before you write me off as smug or just plain insufferable,

take a look at your own life and the things you do every day, to be good or better or the best. Elaine Slater, psychologist at The Priory and the resident British Fashion Council therapist during London Fashion Week, comes across a lot of high-achieving young women in the fashion world who may be suffering from Superwoman Syndrome. She says: 'A big question that these women ask themselves is, "Am I enough as I am?"'

'It's good to know that I'm not the only one feeling the pressure to be cool, smart, fit, thin but not too thin, funny but not bitchy'

It's good to know that I'm not the only one feeling the pressure to be cool, smart, fit, thin but not too thin, funny but not bitchy, a supportive friend, partner, family member. So many of us want to be successful and liked at work, to have opinions about Jeremy Corbyn, the new show at the Tate and the latest Murakami novel as well as *The X Factor* winner and Kendall Jenner's new haircut. And, indulge me a moment here, still there's all that stuff I've circled with a red pen and written 'Must Try Harder' next to. Such as: I should have made that Ottolenghi paella last night and not risotto… I should have gone on the Solidarity With Refugees march this summer…

Lots of my thirtysomething-year-old friends and colleagues relate to this pressure to be 'super'. Nicole, 32, who also works in media, takes it one step further: she spent her pregnancy and maternity leave doing a two-year master's course at Oxford. 'People thought I was a crazy woman,' she says. 'There were times when I was literally breastfeeding my son between classes and pumping milk in my course director's office. Having a child has forced me to mellow out a bit, but not by much. My husband still complains about my inability to stop trying to "be better". I fall asleep to meditation talks on mindfulness and wake up to podcasts and audio books.'

I don't have kids yet (it's on the to-do list, OK?), so I am using this opportunity to make my life tick all the 'right' boxes. Currently my world is full of healthy food and enriching cultural experiences, of positive affirmations shouted at me during spinning classes, of other people's innovative ideas and interesting opinions, of early mornings and body brushing and trying to finish reading at least one article in *The New Yorker*.

'I suggest that you ask yourself, "Am I enjoying this life or am I existing within a self-inflicted regime?"' Elaine advised me during our phone consultation. It made me think of my friend Lisa, an advertising executive who, at 28, is relentless in her need not to *have* it all, but to *do* it all. 'I've often eaten dinner three times in one evening, with three sets of people, so as not to miss any events,' she tells me, before adding, more worryingly, that, 'I've occasionally woken up in the night and decided to watch a documentary, as I've felt anxious about wasting time asleep.' Elaine says these are all Superwoman warning signs: 'You should be able to give yourself a break without then punishing yourself for it. That's an unhealthy pattern.'

What would happen, I thought, if I just chilled the heck out? If I slept in late and ate a cheese croissant for breakfast, if I stayed out till midnight and admitted to my colleagues that I sometimes have non-feminist thoughts, would my life fall apart? I decided to find out.

The first thing I did was set my clocks to the actual time and my morning alarm to 7.30am. I woke up feeling pretty sprightly after nine hours' sleep, did no exercise and ate a bowl of Frosties (part of my 'badass' Ocado shop that also included a bag of mini Babybels and a packet of vegetarian cocktail sausages). As I ambled to the station, I swapped my usual podcast to a Carly Rae Jepsen album, which taught me nothing but put me in an excellent mood. At work, I made less of an effort to not be an awful person. When an email went around celebrating the fact that the Pirelli Calendar now features inspirational women, not models in their underwear, I hit 'reply all' and remarked, 'Am I the only person who preferred the hot semi-naked models?' I got no response.

After work the next day, I met my friend Will for dinner. He's someone who leads a less regimented life than me and with whom I always have a lot of fun. 'Live a little!' was his advice that evening. He's known me since secondary school when I would always rush home to do my homework. So, this need to 'achieve' in order to feel happy or relaxed is nothing new. My drive has a momentum and I worry that if I ever really put the brakes on, all the good things in my life (job/house/partner/general sense of happiness and wellbeing) could quickly unravel. Hence the reason I normally opt for the healthiest option on the menu. But not tonight! Going against the voice in my head that makes me do the right/boring thing all the time felt good. So did the double whisky on the rocks I drank before we called it a night. On the way home, we ducked under a barrier and broke into a rooftop garden – forgetting that I was a responsible adult was fun and reminded me that sometimes it's good to say yes to silly things. Unless of course it's something that could actually get you arrested.

Later in the week, instead of my usual kale-based lunch, eaten while reading magazines, I met my partner for a blowout lunch with champagne at a fancy restaurant. I got back to the office after an hour to find that not much had changed and I still got my work done before six.

'It's all about balance,' said Elaine. 'If you are happy and confident in yourself and your positive choices, the majority of the time, an occasional rebellion is only healthy.'

I had this in mind as the weekend approached. Normally I write to-do lists of house chores. I work, I exercise, I see family, I cook meals for friends, but this weekend I did something new. I had a lie-in. I watched actual crap TV, not something I felt I needed to see on Netflix because everyone was talking about it. I didn't leave the house all day, even though the sun was shining. I couldn't shake the feeling that I should be doing something worthy, like going out for a run or taking my nephew skateboarding; but for every 'good' decision, there's always an even better one. Elaine calls this a 'bombardment of choice' and says it puts us under a lot of pressure: 'Too many options can sometimes feel as debilitating as no options.'

Then Elaine touches on something that really resonates with me. She suggests that 'sometimes we externalise where we get our sense of comfort and security from – we put it into actions and activities rather than finding a secure base inside ourselves – an anchor'. She adds that if this 'base' has been hampered with in some way (illness, deaths, bad break-ups, parents' separation – all familiar things to me), we tend to seek our sense of security from things outside ourselves and they become the 'container' keeping us together. Elaine says that all the activities we Superwomen fill our lives with are great, but they should be done mindfully; that is not by rote or to fill a void. Our 'internal world', she says, 'should be solid and secure.' There's something in this for me for sure, and maybe there is for you too. But before adding 'Sort Internal Self' to your ever-growing to-do list, remember the answer to the question, 'Am I enough as I am?' is probably, actually, no – you're even better.



LISTEN to Lotte and the team talk about Superwoman Syndrome at elleuk.com/podcasts



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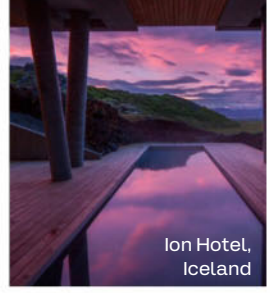
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TRAVEL

ELLE


Ion Hotel, Iceland

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The panel
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ELLE Travel & Lifestyle Director


LIZ SIMPSON
Editor, i-escape.com


LEE THOMPSON
Co-founder The Flash Pack


TAMARA HEBER-PERCY
Co-founder, Mr & Mrs Smith


TOM MARCHANT
Co-founder, Black Tomato


TOM DIXON
Managing director, Canopy & Stars


CLAIRE BETTS
Latin America expert, Last Frontiers


Le Jardin des Douars, Morocco

CHIC SHACK AWARDS 2016

From a floating castle to an Ethiopian mountain lodge, our panel of travel experts nominate their favourite chic shacks around the world


Entre Cielos, Argentina

BOOK IT


L'Ile Flottante, France

In our eighth annual Chic Shack Awards, we continue to champion our idea of the perfect place to stay: small, simple and stylish. There is an ongoing trend for retreats like this – they are usually privately owned and, whether it's a treehouse in France, a beach bungalow in Burma, or a winter retreat in the lunar landscape of Iceland, all have the same remote and romantic feel. ›

EDITED BY
SUSAN WARD DAVIES



Floor-to-ceiling views at Ion Hotel, Iceland

Hotel Ion, Iceland

One of the most otherworldly places I have ever stayed in, Hotel Ion is the very chicest of shacks. Just 25 miles from Reykjavik, in a remote lunar landscape, its 45 rooms are housed in a long, hut-like structure built on stilts and jutting out over lava fields. Standing next to a geothermic energy plant (the hotel was originally an inn for its workers), whose clouds of steam welcome you, eerily, from a distance, it was reworked by design studio Minarc into a stylish, futuristic hotel, a clever mix of urban (concrete and steel) and earthy (driftwood and lava rocks). With its indoor/outdoor Lava Spa, spectacular glass Northern Lights bar and exquisite modern Nordic menu (lamb tartare with poached egg and angelica-scented skyr or smoked trout with pickled apple), it is totally unforgettable.
Nesjavellir, 801 Selfoss, Iceland; +354 482 3415; ioniceland.is; doubles from £180, room only



Stunning views of the Northern Lights behind Ion Hotel

SUSAN WARD DAVIES
ELLE Travel & Lifestyle Director

Fellah Hotel, Morocco

Fancy a hotel that ticks all the cool, arty and philanthropic boxes (Unesco credited, no less)? This arts-centre-cum-hotel, about 20 minutes' drive from Marrakech, is a design junkie's dream: think Arne Jacobsen and Eames chairs alongside zellige tiles. The local villagers not only work there (one, Touco, has his own on-site tea room), but their children even get to use the kids' club. And with a constant influx of artists in residence, there are always workshops or ideas sessions going on. The Fellah's 60 spacious rooms and suites are spread between 10 villas, each with its own design and amazing, gallery-worthy, original artwork. Take a turn in the gym's boxing ring, join in cookery classes, help out at the micro farm or just chill by the pool knowing that every mojito you order is benefiting the local community. Guilt-free pleasure.
Route de Marrakech, El Jadida, Morocco; +212 525 065 000; fellah-hotel.com; doubles from £94, room only

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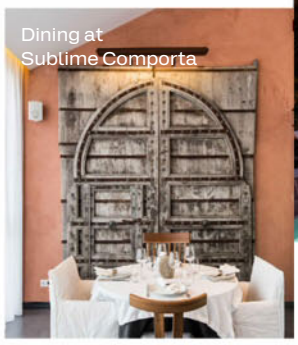


Fellah Hotel's interior



Fellah Hotel, Marrakech



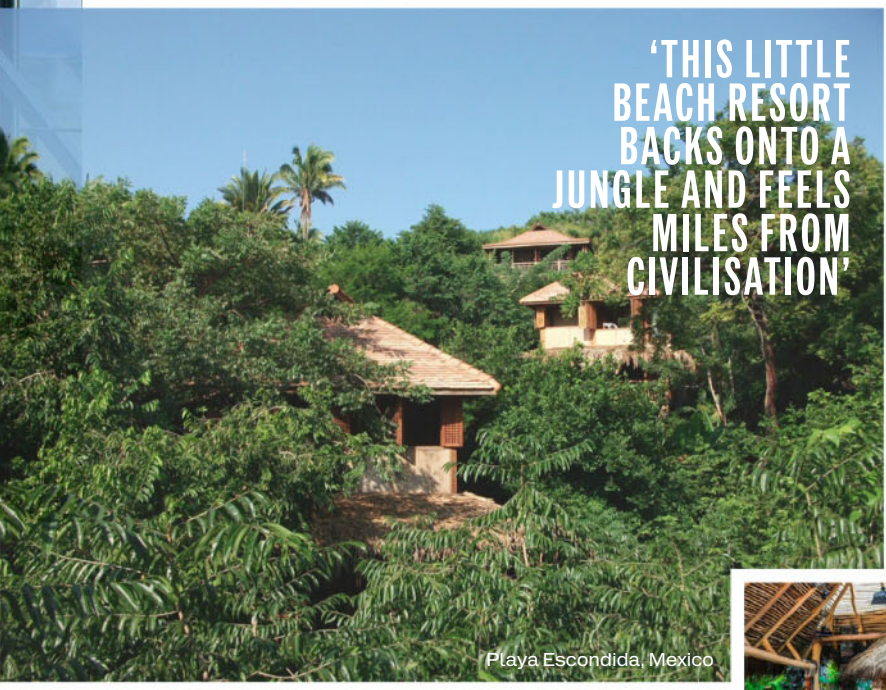


Dining at Sublime Comporta



The pool at Sublime Comporta

@LIZZO_SIMPSON



'THIS LITTLE BEACH RESORT BACKS ONTO A JUNGLE AND FEELS MILES FROM CIVILISATION'

Playa Escondida, Mexico



LIZ SIMPSON
Editor, i-escape.com

Playa Escondida, Mexico
I often daydream about being at Playa Escondida, swinging in a hammock, drinking icy margaritas. This little beach resort backs onto jungle and feels miles from civilisation, with its 29 rooms and villas hidden away among giant ferns and palm trees. Cheery staff smile all day, and the restaurant dishes up delicious seafood casserole with star anise and fresh ceviche with lime, chillies and avocado. Sure, you can zipline, surf and whale watch, but I mostly imagine lazing on the golden sand, soaking up the sun and quiet. *Playa Escondida #1, 63734 Sayulita, Nayarit, Mexico; +52 329 291 3641; i-escape.com/playa-escondida/overview; doubles from £107, room only*

Sublime Comporta, Portugal
The sleepy village of Comporta has been likened to St Tropez in the Eighties. Staying here feels as if you've been let in on a secret, yet it's just a 90-minute drive south of Lisbon. Tucked away in a pine forest, this stunning hotel's 14 bedrooms and suites look straight from the pages of *ELLE Decoration*. We loved the innovative tasting menus, the spa's sleeping pods for post-massage snoozes, and bike rides to empty golden beaches. Sublime, indeed. *EN 261-1, Muda, 7570-337, Comporta, Portugal; +351 269 449 376; i-escape.com/sublime-comporta/overview; doubles from £142, B&B, plus a bottle of wine when booked via i-escape bookers*

Le Jardin des Douars, Morocco
As you pass through the gates of this countryside escape 15 minutes from Essaouira, calm slips over you like a djellaba. Botanical gardens brim with colour, and two jade pools are heated to 28°C so you can swim all year round. The 25 rooms and three villas have traditional tiled floors and antique furniture, plus a deliberate absence of TVs and WiFi, so you're forced to switch off. It cleverly caters for both families and couples; with adult-only areas including a restaurant and candlelit hammam. Unlike other parts of Morocco, Essaouira is a year-round destination, and budget flights from London make it easy to get to. *Douar Sidi Yassine, Ida Oueguerd, 44000, P°/ Essaouira; +212 524 474 003; i-escape.com/le-jardin-des-douars/overview; doubles from £80, B&B, plus a 30-minute hammam and black-soap exfoliation for i-escape bookers*



Le Jardin des Douars, Morocco

Photography: Nelson Garrido, instagram.com/PlayaEscondida, Sigurjón Ragnar, Gabriele Spadini.

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LEE THOMPSON

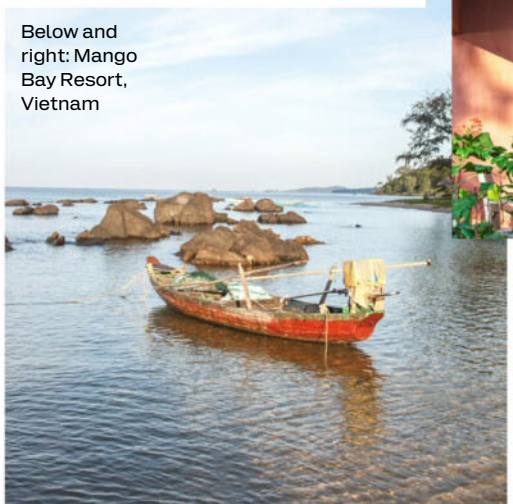
Co-founder, The Flash Pack

Amara Ocean Resort, Burma

With 1,200 miles of coastline, much of it long stretches of white sand, Burma is one of my top Flash Packer beach destinations. Several daily flights from Yangon to coastal Ngapali make this idyllic hideaway easy to get to yet still relatively undiscovered – think Thailand 20 years ago. The Amara Ocean Resort is my favourite, with its beautifully designed teak villas on stilts, all with sea views, just steps away from the beach.
No 42 D1, Aye Yeik Thar 2nd Street, Sein Lei Yeik Thar Housing, Bahan Township, Yangon, Burma; +49 89 272 1596; amaragroup.net; doubles from £190, B&B

Mango Bay Resort, Vietnam

Mango Bay is my go-to place when I need a few days of total escapism from the modern world. Phu Quoc may be well known, but this rustic-style eco-resort will make you feel as if you've discovered a secret beach. There are a range of bungalows, each with a spacious balcony, open-air shower and sea views – but no WiFi, so it is the perfect place for a digital detox.
Ong Lang Beach, Phu Quoc Island, Kien Giang Province, Vietnam; +84 773 981 693; mangobayphuquoc.com; doubles from £123, B&B


Below and right: Mango Bay Resort, Vietnam



TAMARA HEBER-PERCY

Co-founder, Mr & Mrs Smith

Six Senses, Ninh Van Bay, Vietnam

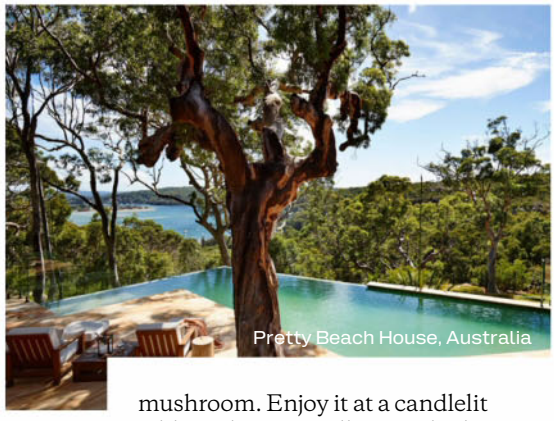
The winner of 'Sexiest Bedroom in the World' at the Smith Hotel Awards 2014, Six Senses Ninh Van Bay is accessible only by boat. Its 58 villas are set in a beautiful, isolated, beachside spot with white sand and turquoise lagoons. The polished rustic interiors are pared back, yet luxurious. And each thatched-roof villa has its own plunge pool and elegant open-air bathroom. The spa's peaceful treatment pavilions are dotted along the hillside in the jungle, overlooking the bay.
Ninh Van Bay, Ninh Hòa, Khánh Hòa, Vietnam; +84 58 3524 268; mrandmrssmith.com/luxury-hotels/six-senses-ninh-van-bay; doubles from £530, B&B

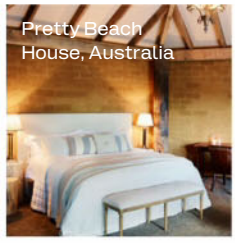
Pretty Beach House, Australia

Tucked away in Bouddi National Park's treetops, Pretty Beach House has four wood-panelled lodges (the peaceful Hideaway Pavilion is my favourite) decked out with natural fabrics and locally sourced art. Each pavilion has a private terrace framed by wild plants – native gum trees and eucalyptus – with dramatic views across the Brisbane Water, and a private plunge pool. Renowned chef Stefano Manfredi devised the hotel's brilliant Italian menu of handmade pizzas and ravioli filled with seasonal ingredients, such as wild boar and mushroom. Enjoy it at a candlelit table in the wine cellar, overlooking the landscaped grounds.
83 Highview Rd, Pretty Beach NSW 2257, Australia; +61 2 4360 1933; mrandmrssmith.com/luxury-hotels/pretty-beach-house; doubles from £903, full board, including selected drinks, minibar, snacks, a didgeridoo-smoking ceremony (with canapés and cocktails) and mountain bike hire



Six Senses, Ninh Van Bay, Vietnam


Pretty Beach House, Australia

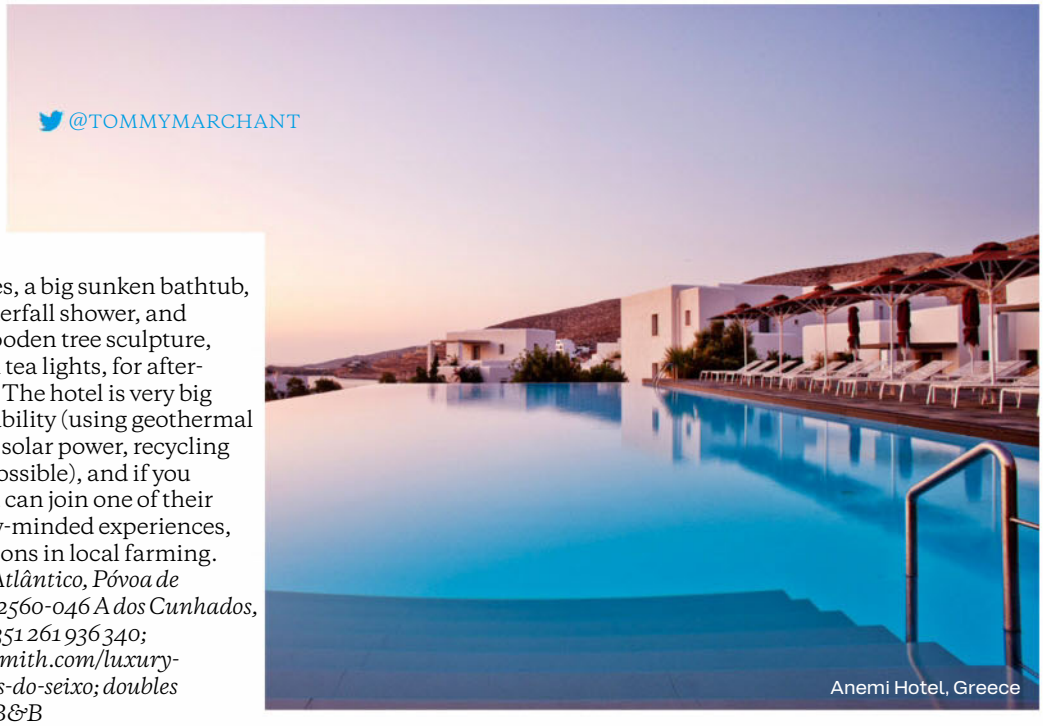

Pretty Beach House, Australia

Areias do Seixo, Portugal

This futuristic, glass-panelled eco-structure, less than half an hour from Lisbon, may look ultra modern from the outside, but its 14 rooms, five villas and one treehouse are charmingly rustic, with four-posters made with driftwood, and draped in soft linens and handmade patchwork quilts. Each room has a sizeable concrete-lined bathroom, but the Three Wishes' is the most impressive, with a whole wall inlaid

Photography: Pierre Espardeille, Stevie Mann, courtesy of Mr & Mrs Smith.





Anemi Hotel, Greece

with pebbles, a big sunken bathtub, walk-in waterfall shower, and a carved wooden tree sculpture, strung with tea lights, for after-dark soaks. The hotel is very big on sustainability (using geothermal energy and solar power, recycling wherever possible), and if you are too, you can join one of their community-minded experiences, such as lessons in local farming. *Praceta do Atlântico, Póvoa de Penafirme, 2560-046 A dos Cunhados, Portugal; +351 261 936 340; mrandmrssmith.com/luxury-hotels/areias-do-seixo; doubles from £190, B&B*

TOM MARCHANT

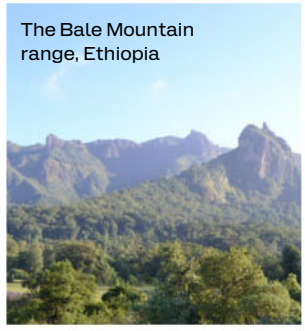
Co-founder, Black Tomato

Anemi Hotel, Greece

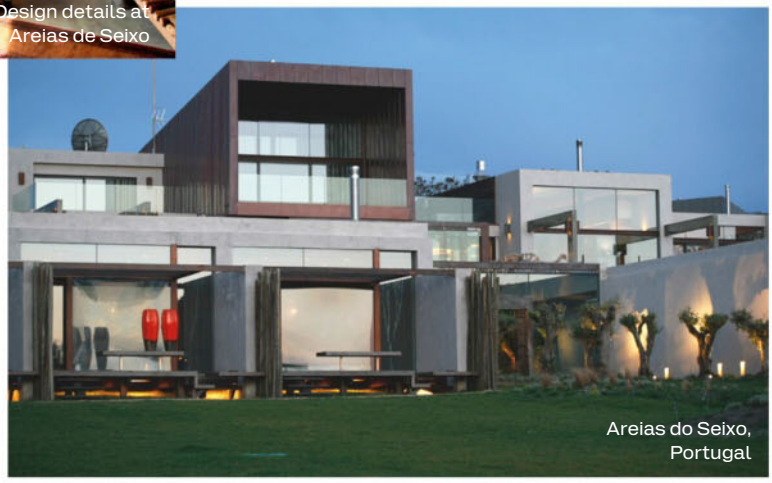
You'll find this little coastal hideaway on Folegandros, one of the beautiful Cyclades Islands. It may be only a 90-minute boat ride from Santorini, but couldn't be further from its neighbour's hustle and bustle, giving beach-lovers a taste of the sleepier, more traditional Greek island life. Folegandros is known for its almost primitive natural environment, and the Anemi's clean, elegant design reflects this. Right on Karavostasi Beach, the hotel's 44 whitewashed, low-rise rooms have sweeping views of the Aegean. The spacious pool suites are a hit with honeymooners, and with so few tourists, you're likely to have the sands and the clear waters to yourself. Food is a big deal here, with a strong focus on local produce and Greek wines from their own cellar. *84 011 Karavostasis, Folegandros, Greece; +30 22860 41610; anemihotel.gr; doubles from about £138, B&B*

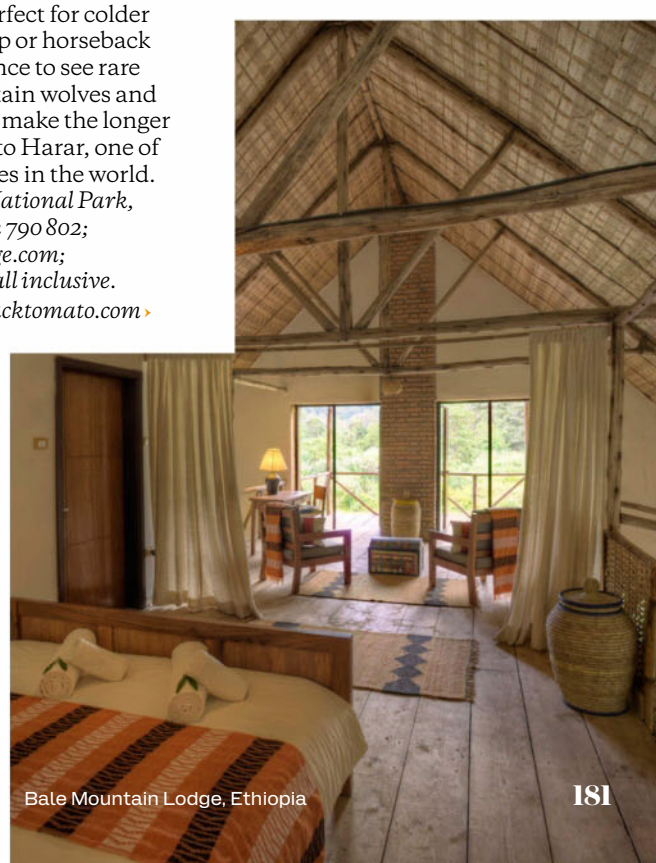
Bale Mountain Lodge, Ethiopia

Made up of just eight suites, this wilderness retreat is hidden away in the Bale Mountains National Park, in the beautiful south-central region of Ethiopia. Local stone makes rooms blend into the hillside, so as not to scare away the animals, and balconies give sweeping views of the forest. Each room has a kitchen and a wood burner – perfect for colder nights. Take a jeep or horseback safari for the chance to see rare Ethiopian mountain wolves and Bale monkeys, or make the longer (377km) trip east to Harar, one of the most holy cities in the world. *Bale Mountains National Park, Ethiopia; +251 912 790 802; balemountainlodge.com; rooms from £142, all inclusive. For booking see blacktomato.com*


The Bale Mountain range, Ethiopia


Design details at Areias de Seixo


Areias do Seixo, Portugal


Bale Mountain Lodge, Ethiopia


L'Ile Flottante, France

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CLAIRE BETTS
Latin American expert, Last Frontiers

Galápagos Safari Camp, Galápagos Islands, Ecuador
In the highlands of the island of Santa Cruz, the family-owned Galápagos Safari Camp took its inspiration from the African camps that do tented luxury so well. Built at an elevation of almost 1,600ft, making for incredible views of the northern and western islands, its nine tents are spacious, and each has electricity, a surprisingly decent bathroom and a balcony. Wandering around the camp you'll spot giant tortoises roaming freely, or finches taking a dip in the infinity pool. This is a great place from which to explore the nearby islands if you prefer to be land- rather than boat-based at night.
Finco Palo Santo, Barrio Salasaca, Santa Cruz, Galapagos; +593 99 37 1 7552; lastfrontiers.com/hotels/galapagos/santa-cruz/safari camp; tents for two from £1,380 for two nights, including full board and transfers

Entre Cielos Hotel, Argentina
This small, stylish hotel, in the foothills of the Andes, is surrounded by vineyards, including three hectares of Malbec vines from which the hotel's own Marantal wine is made. Of the 16 rooms, by far the quirkiest is Rosa Blanca, which sprouts from the vineyard below on stilts, with a bathtub on the terrace and a skylight for stargazing). The main building has floor-to-ceiling windows, an excellent restaurant, and there's a pool in the lovely gardens.
1998 Guardia Vieja, Vistalba, Lujan de Cuyo, Argentina; +54 0261 498 3377; lastfrontiers.com/hotels/argentina/mendoza/entrecielos; Rosa Blanca room from £321, B&B






The Treehouse at Château de Labro. Above: A stylish and elegant interior

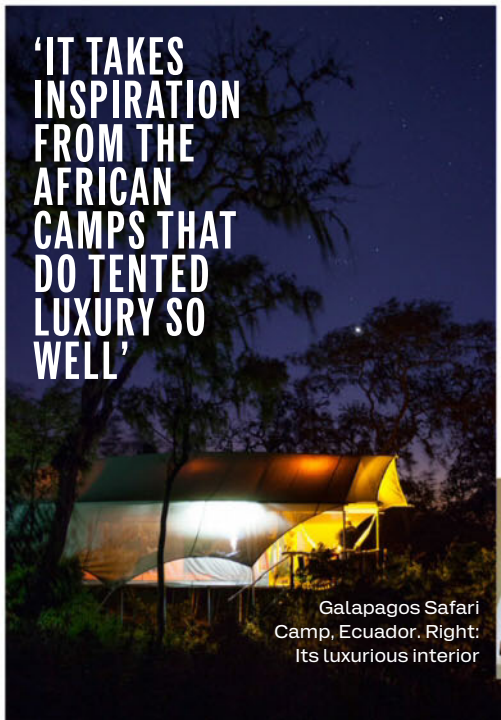
TOM DIXON
Managing director, Canopy & Stars

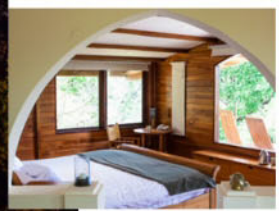
L'Ile Flottante, France
The latest creation of Rémi Becherel (France's most celebrated treehouse builder) was inspired by the remains of the castle it was built on, with mini fairy-tale turrets and a surrounding moat with floating hot tub. There is plenty to do on the 27-acre site, but we wouldn't blame you for staying put: inside there's a king-size bed, coffee machine and even WiFi. But if you do venture out, the food in the nearby village is really very good.
Châteaux dans les Arbres, Domaine de Puybéton, 24440 Nojals-et-Clotte, France; 0117 204 7830; canopyandstars.co.uk/lileflottante. Sleeps two, from £185 per night

The Treehouse at Château de Labro, France
I first stayed at the 16th-century Château de Labro on a mammoth trip through France, where it was a longed-for moment of luxury with its fabulous restaurant, spa and own vineyard. The chateau's treehouse is unexpectedly stylish and elegant, with a crystal chandelier, no less, and a welcome bottle of champagne to enjoy on the balcony overlooking the beautiful estate.
Aveyron, Labro, 12850 Onet-le-Château, Middi Pyrenees, France; 0117 204 7830; canopyandstars.co.uk/labro; sleeps two, from £208 per night

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Galapagos Safari Camp, Ecuador. Right: Its luxurious interior


Entre Cielos Hotel, Argentina

Photography: Ken Kochey.

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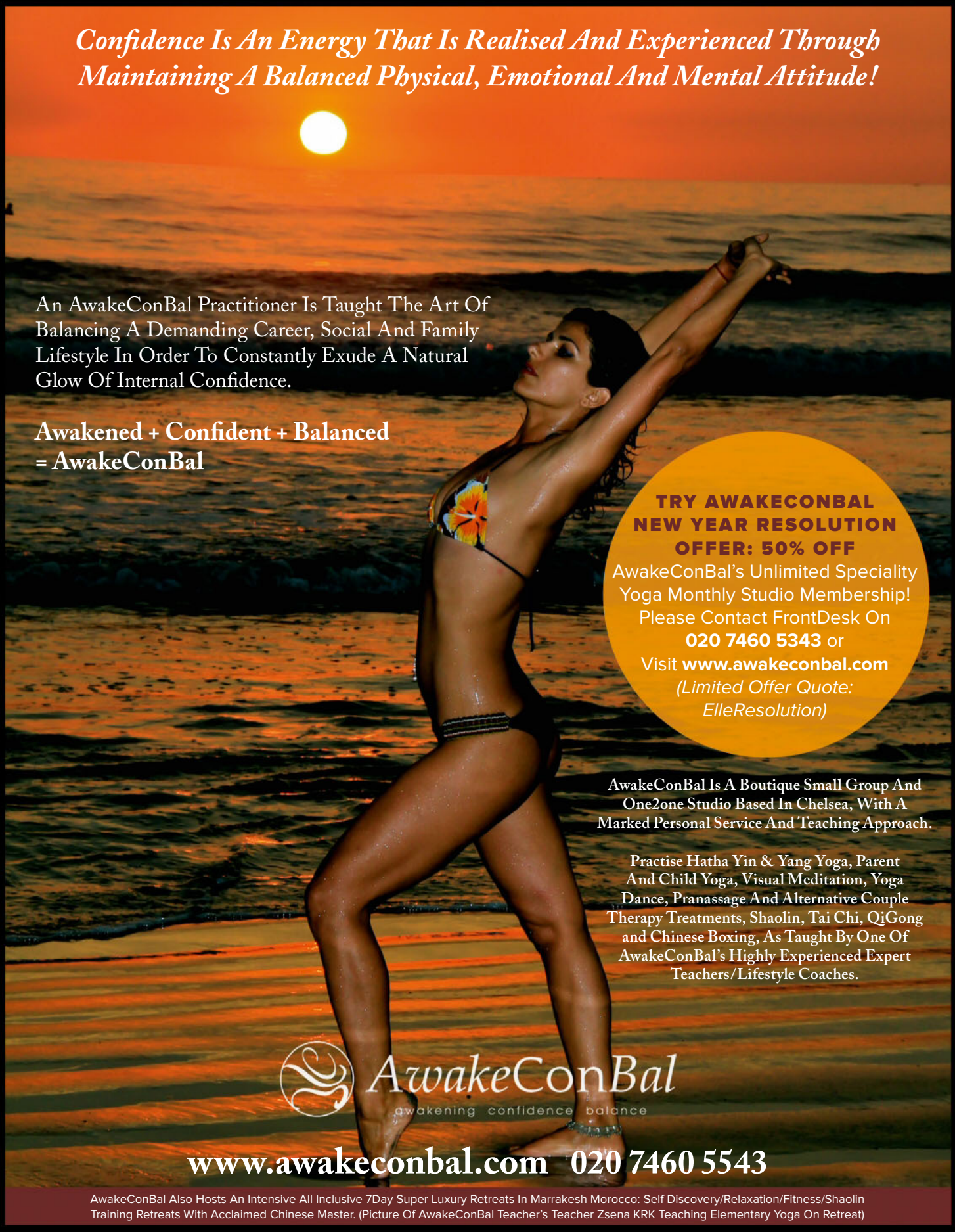


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Thomas Lavone is a Newark, New Jersey based custom couture designer known for exceptional evening wear. Born into a family of artisans, craftsmen, and sewers Thomas would be destined for a career as a designer. He attended San Diego Mesa College design school in California and attained an internship with Richard Tyler.

Thomas Lavone was encouraged by professors because of his understanding of fit. Thomas would later move to New York and spend 10 years in the fashion industry as a technical designer. He has worked for DKNY, Jones New York, and Victoria's Secret, to name a few. Thomas Lavone evokes a timeless feminine aesthetic that is both polished and striking. An unparalleled craftsmanship beguiles the standard with perfect lines and exceptional fit.

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HAPPINESS DOESN'T RESULT FROM WHAT WE GET, BUT WHAT WE GIVE



With Christmas around the corner, we're all looking for unique ways to show those close to us that we care. The perfect gift is something that sends a positive message and offers happiness for days to come. But how can you find the perfect gift without breaking the bank? It would have to be something with all natural quality, that's easy to use, attractive, and has health- boosting benefits that last. What better way to show you care than with the all-in-one body, mind, and spirit-boosting Pranamat ECO?

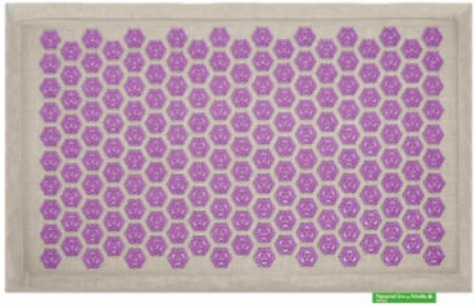
It makes the perfect gift because it offers health benefits that everyone can enjoy, regardless of their age, physical fitness, schedule, or space. The Pranamat ECO is designed to be flexible, and fit the needs of the modern consumer. Although it offers all the same benefits of traditional acupressure, it takes no special knowledge or training to use. Just lay it on the floor, chair, or favorite sitting spot and apply light pressure. It's deceptively simple, and comes doctor recommended.

HOW IT WORKS

The Pranamat ECO blends the ancient eastern tradition of acupressure with modern medicine, to offer true health benefits that need to be seen to be believed. You choose short, regular sessions on the Pranamat, targeting your back, shoulders, feet, or any other part of your body and let the patented lotus spikes do their work. By stimulating blood circulation and boosting cardiovascular health, the mat is able to promote full body wellness by targeting one specific area.

By increasing the rate of blood micro-circulation, Pranamat ECO locally increases metabolic processes in tissues, resulting in reduced inflammation in muscles and joints, and increased the release of beta-endorphins. All of this adds up to an overall feeling of wellness and lasting health benefits. All it takes is a 15 minute commitment each day in order to completely revitalize skin, deep tissue, metabolic and cardiovascular health.

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for your Pranamat ECO



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The Pranamat ECO is the perfect Christmas gift for anyone in your life. Who doesn't value good health, convenience, and a bit of extra relaxation? By placing your order now, you'll be sure to bring a bit of extra cheer to your loved one's holiday, in a way that's unique, all natural, and totally effective.
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FINAL SAY

TOMMY HILFIGER

The all-American designer, 64, lets us into his fashionable world



DO YOU READ REVIEWS OF YOUR SHOWS? Always – it's important to know what the industry is thinking and how they are responding to collections each season.

WHO IS YOUR MUSE? My wife, Dee. She's confident and has an effortless style.

WHAT CAN YOU SEE FROM YOUR OFFICE WINDOW? The Hudson River. I love that it still has a slightly industrial feel, and it is always buzzing with creative energy.

WHAT SPORT DO YOU LOVE MOST? Tennis. I have huge respect for Rafael Nadal.



FAVOURITE COLOUR?

NAVY BLUE



MOST USED

EMOJIS:

😀 😋 👍





WHO ARE YOUR FAVOURITE MODELS? Gigi (below left) and Bella Hadid, Hailey Baldwin, Elizabeth Jagger, Binx Walton (below right), Stella Maxwell and Tami Williams.



STYLE IS...

TIMELESS. TRENDS COME AND GO, BUT CLASSIC STYLE IS ALWAYS IN FASHION.



WHICH HASHTAG WOULD BEST SUM UP THE SS16 HILFIGER COLLECTION?

#ISLANDLIFE



WHO ARE YOUR IDOLS? Mick Jagger, David Bowie, Jimmy Page and Jimi Hendrix.

DESCRIBE YOUR PERFECT DAY OFF? Vintage shopping with my daughters – it's our favourite hobby. In LA there's a cool place called Decades, and in New York we like Trash And Vaudeville.

WHO WOULD YOU LIKE TO INTERVIEW? John F. Kennedy or Martin Luther King, Jr. They were my father's heroes.



WHAT WOULD IT SURPRISE PEOPLE TO KNOW ABOUT YOU? I love yoga. I practise every day. It keeps me relaxed and helps me start each day in the right frame of mind. It's also easy to do anywhere, which is perfect for me because I travel so much.

WHAT IS THE FIRST THING YOU DO EVERY MORNING? Yoga or a run through Central Park. Then I have a breakfast of fruit and fresh juices with my wife and our youngest son, Sebastian, who's six.

AND THE LAST THING YOU DO AT NIGHT? Put Sebastian to bed at around 8pm, and then Dee and I have some time to read, watch a movie or call our other kids to catch up.



WHAT ARE YOU READING RIGHT NOW? *Steve Jobs* by Walter Isaacson. It shows that everyone – even a brilliant maverick like Jobs – makes a lot of mistakes along the way. There's a benefit to making mistakes – it's always a learning experience.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO 16-YEAR-OLD YOU? Stay true to yourself.

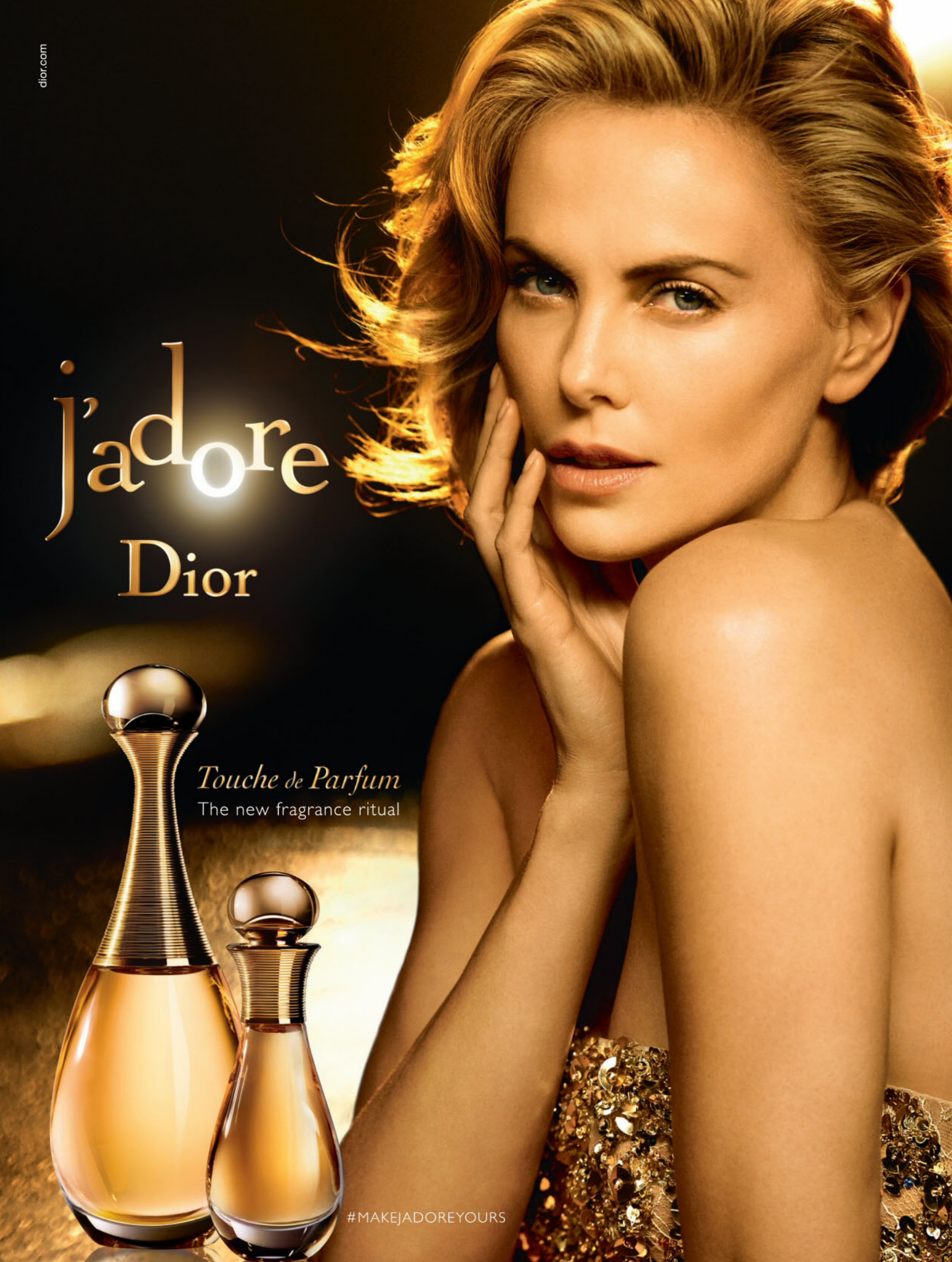
WHAT KEEPS YOU UP AT NIGHT? Jet lag. It can be a killer for sleeping patterns.

WHO WAS THE LAST PERSON YOU TEXTED? My wife. I was confirming our dinner plans.

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN THE MOVIE OF YOUR LIFE? Richard Gere or Pierce Brosnan.

Compiled by: Gillian Brett. Photography: Alamy, Getty, Imaxtree, Instagram/TommyHilfiger, Instagram/JoanSmalls, Jason Lloyd-Evans, courtesy of Tommy Hilfiger.


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